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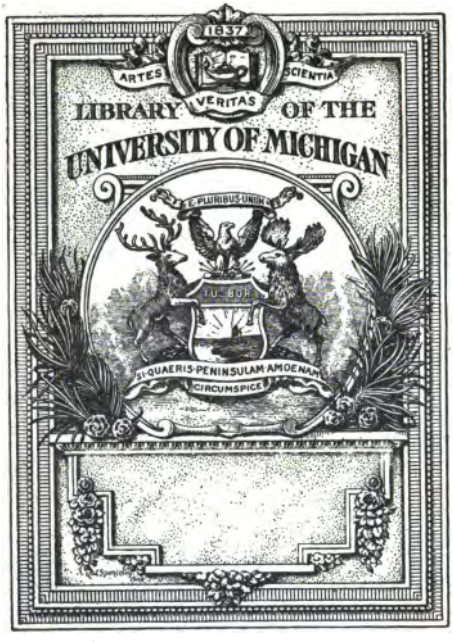
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MRS. CHAPONE:

NOW FIRST COLLECTED.

CONTAINING

I. LETTERS ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE MIND.
II. MISCELLANIES.
III. CORRESPONDENCE WITH MR. RICHARDSON.
IV. LETTERS TO MISS CARTER.
V. FUGITIVE PIECES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

An Account of her Life and Character,

DRAWN UP

BY HER OWN FAMILY.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, FLEET-STREET, AND A. CONSTABLE AND CO. EDINBURGH.

1807.

MISCELLANIES,

IN

PROSE AND VERSE.

INCLUDING

A LETTER TO A NEWLY-MARRIED LADY.

BY

MRS. CHAPONE.

A NEW EDITION.

WITH THE AUTHOR'S LAST CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, FLEET-STREET, AND A. CONSTABLE AND CO. AND J. THOMSON, JUNR. AND CO. EDINBURGH.

1807.

WRIGHT, Printer, No. 38, St. John's Square.

TO

MRS. ELIZABETH CARTER.

DEAR MADAM,

As my presumption, in offering this little volume to the public, has been principally excited by you, and your admirable friend, Mrs. MONTAGU, it is fit you should take your share of whatever blame it may incur. After a course of years, which should have added to my judgment what

it has taken from my imagination, and in which vanity and ambition have been sufficiently repressed by affliction, to produce to the world the trifling performances of my youth, which I then had modesty enough to conceal, is, I must confess, what my own feelings would never have dictated, had not two such friends, whose judgment and sincerity I could not distrust, pronounced that so it must be. With such supporters, however, I think myself secure against contempt, and that when it shall be known that

both my youth and age have been blessed and honoured with the friendship of Mrs. CARTER, the world will be disposed to treat me with kindness, unless that kindness should be intercepted by envy.

The following little poems you know were most of them written when I was very young, and all of them (except the translations) many years ago; the last has already appeared in a far more honourable station, at the head of your admirable translation of

Epictetus; but as many persons read poetry who do not read philosophy, I am advised to reprint it here.

The prose essays (excepting the Story of Fidelia, which appeared in the Adventurer) are late compositions. I fear the greater number of my readers may think them too strongly tinctured with that seriousness which has long been the prevailing habit of my mind; while others, of a more similar cast of thought, may possibly be led by

them to useful and improving reflections. If in any mind they should raise or strengthen a single sentiment favourable to virtue, I shall be better rewarded than by the most universal applauses of the public.

Esteemed and honoured as is my excellent friend, amongst the most distinguished characters of this country, I persuade myself that she will not disdain my humbler testimony to that worth, which I prefer to all the learning and genius that have gained her

the general admiration of the world; but that she will allow me to boast of a title which I consider as the highest honour, that of

Her most affectionate

And faithful friend,

H. CHAPONE.

Wardour Street,
Jan. 20, 1775.

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MISCELLANIES.

ESSAY I.

ON AFFECTATION AND SIMPLICITY.

IF I were asked which of all the qualities that constitute an amiable character would singly go farthest in gaining my love and admiration, I should answer, without hesitation, *Simplicity*. I cannot suppose myself peculiar in this preference; for I have observed the general attraction of this quality, which operates even on those who are themselves most deficient in it. How comes it then to pass that an excessive de-

sire of admiration always shews itself in *Affectation* of some kind or other? That every one should, in proportion to the strength of this desire, act in a manner which most effectually defeats the accomplishment of it, is surely a phenomenon in the moral world, not unworthy the enquiry of philosophers.

Affectation is so universally acknowledged to be disgusting, that it is among the faults which the most intimate friends cannot venture gravely to reprove in each other; for, to tell your friends that they are habitually affected, is to tell them that they are habitually disagreeable; which nobody can bear to hear. I beg leave therefore, as a general friend, without offending any one, to whisper to all those whose hearts confess that vanity has inspired them with any sort of affectation, *that it never does, nor never can succeed as a means of pleasing.*

I have a thousand times wished to tell

Flirtilla, that the efforts she makes to be constantly in motion, and perpetually giggling, do not pass upon me for the vivacity of youth: I see they cost her a great deal of trouble, and it gives me an irritation of nerves to look at her; so that it would have been much for her ease and mine, could I have ventured to beg that she would always in my presence give way to her natural languor and dulness, which would be far more agreeable to me.

Gloriosa, whenever a remarkable instance of generosity or goodness is mentioned, takes infinite pains, with the most pompous eloquence, to convince me that the action seems poor to the greatness of *her* soul—that *she* should think half her fortune a trifling gift to a worthy friend—that she would rather suffer the most exquisite pain herself, than see a fellow-creature, though a stranger, endure it—and that it is a nobler effort in *her* to *refrain*

from the most generous actions, than it would be in the greatest miser to perform them.—I long to let her know, that the only effect these declarations produce in my mind is, a doubt, which I should otherwise never have entertained, whether she really possesses even the common portion of good-nature and benevolence.

Humanus, on the other hand, need not be so much ashamed of his tenderness and goodness of heart—which is the only agreeable part of his character, and which all his affected roughness and insensibility cannot hide. Be content, good Humanus; you never can attain the reputation to which you aspire, of a stern unfeeling heart; we all know you are good-natured and affectionate; and it is for the sake of these qualities alone that we endure all the disgusting airs of brutality you give yourself.

Poor young *Saunter*, having observed

that the few men of fashion and fortune who admit him into their company are gamesters and debauchées, thinks nothing more is necessary to make him appear like a man of fashion and fortune than to be thought a gamester and a debauchée. To this end he really practises some vices, and professes many more. He will entertain you for hours with boasting of ruinous bets which he never made, and riotous debauches of which he never was guilty. But nobody believes him: every body knows that the poor young man would be sober enough, if he thought it genteel; and, notwithstanding the great spirit with which he professes to despise his too indulgent father, and to wish him dead, there are strong suspicions that he is not absolutely without natural affection, and that he really does not behave ill to the good old man, except in the article of spending too much of his money. Let me persuade you, Saunter,

to make an experiment, whether the world would not receive you as well with a few good qualities, as with all the bad ones you assume. If you find it does not succeed, you may more easily return to the ways of vice, than you could to those of virtue should you delay much longer, and should you ever have sense enough to perceive what a despicable animal vanity has made you.

The important airs and insolence of a rich mechanic, just setting up for a gentleman, is not a more decisive mark of a low-lived man, than the overstrained humility of *Superbia* is of an immeasurable pride. Whilst she depreciates herself in every sentence, and affects to exalt her companions so far above her, that she will scarcely allow herself worthy to converse with them, she makes them feel her proud condescension in a manner that is more offensive than the most openly assumed superiority.

Her aim is, to place in the strongest point of view the advantages she has, or thinks she has, over them, and then to be supposed superior in herself to all those advantages, and adorned with such humility as must heighten their respect and admiration. Poor woman! she fails in both these aims. Her affected humility renders her contemptibly ridiculous; and her real pride arms every body's self-love against her, and disposes them to undervalue those circumstances on which they see she founds her consequence.

As liars often presume so far on the politeness of the company—which forbids the flat contradiction of a matter of fact—as to utter the most palpable falsehoods; so the persons I have described presume, on the same grounds, that every one they converse with is the dupe of their affectation. A little better opinion of the sagacity of others would save both the *affected* and the *cun-*

ning a world of unnecessary trouble. Cunning does indeed sometimes succeed in deceiving the particular person to whom it is applied; but a man characteristically artful is almost always seen through by the generality of the world. Affected gestures, manner, or sentiments in conversation are obvious to every understanding: every one joins in pronouncing them ridiculous.—One of the most affected women I ever knew, said to me once, in a tone of the utmost languor, "You know one had better "be *dead* than be *affected!*"—thus, all condemn what they expect to be admired for; and hope, against all reason and probability, to impose on the world by the same arts which they can themselves so easily discern in others, and so readily join to deride.

While the vain man is painfully striving to outshine all the company, and to attract their admiration, by false wit, forced

compliments, and studied graces, he must surely be mortified to observe how constantly *Simplicius* engages their attention, respect, and complacency, without having once thought of himself as a person of any consequence among them. Simplicius imparts his superior knowledge, when called upon, as easily and naturally as he would tell you what it is o'clock; and with the same readiness and good-will informs the most ignorant, or confers with the most learned. He is as willing to receive information as to give it, and to join the company, as far as he is able, in the most trifling conversation into which they happen to fall, as in the most serious or sublime. If he disputes, it is with as much candour on the most important and interesting, as on the most insignificant subjects, and he is not less patient in hearing than in answering his antagonist. If you talk to him of himself, or his works, he

accepts praise, or acknowledges defects, with equal meekness, and it is impossible to suspect him of affectation in either. We are more obliged and gratified by the plain unexaggerated expressions of his regard, than by the compliments and attentions of the most accomplished pattern of high-breeding; because his benevolence and sincerity are so strongly marked in every look, word, and action, that we are convinced his civilities are offered for our sakes, not for his own, and are the natural effects of real kindness, not the studied ornaments of behaviour. Every one is desirous to shew him kindness in return, which we know will be accepted just as it is meant. All are ready to pay him that deference which he does not desire, and to give him credit for more than he assumes, or even for more than he possesses. With a person ungraceful, and with manners unpolished by the world, his behaviour is

always proper, easy, and respectable; as free from constraint and servility in the highest company, as from haughtiness and insolence in the lowest. His dignity arises from his humility; and the sweetness, gentleness, and frankness of his manners, from the real goodness and rectitude of his heart, which lies open to inspection in all the fearlessness of truth, without any need of disguise or ornament.

Where this foundation of real virtue is wanting, every art of pleasing is but the thin superficial covering of deformity, which becomes the more disgusting by the pains taken to dress it in false colours. No wonder then that *Simplicity* is so sure of attracting love and approbation, since it implies almost every other virtue. No wonder that the heart, where envy, pride, and vanity reside, will not venture to trust itself to the lips or eyes. "*Dare to be* "*what you are*," is a good maxim; but it

will only be put in practice by those who are what they ought to be. Every one may however rest assured, that they are generally *known* for what they are, and that falshood, like Cain, has a mark set upon it by Heaven. This mark may not be discerned on a superficial view, nor by the foolish, the young, and inexperienced; but in a short course of years it will be discovered by so many eyes, that the world cannot be kept ignorant of it, and it will then be punished by the scorn it deserves.

Whoever, therefore, desires to please, to be respected and beloved, let him first give his attention to the inward state of his mind. When all is right there, outward elegancies may be easily attained, or the want of them easily excused. But if nature and the heart have no share in dictating his behaviour, his looks, and his sentments, he may be a fop, a dancing-master,

a courtier, or a spy; but he can never be an amiable man.

This, the noble writer, whose letters to his son have lately engaged the attention of the public, seems to have forgotten. Intent on those worldly advantages, which cannot be attained without the good-will of mankind, he unweariedly recommends and enforces the *appearances* of all that he thinks engaging, but forgets that those appearances must be the result of real excellencies, which he takes no pains to inculcate. Even* sweetness of countenance he

* Vide Lord Chesterfield's Letters, Letter 220.—"Learn even to compose your *countenance* to the "respectful, the cheerful, and the insinuating." Letter 221.—"An air, a tone of voice, a composure "of countenance to mildness and softness, which "are all easily acquired, do the business; and "without farther examination, and possibly with "the contrary qualities, that man is reckoned the "gentlest, the modestest, the best-natured man "alive. Happy the man who with a certain fund "of parts and knowledge gets acquainted with the

thinks may be put on and adjusted at the glass, like the rouge and the bouquet; and that his son may possess *les manieres nobles*, and all the charms of liberal and ingenuous youth, whilst in reality he regulates his *friendships by his views of future advancement; †conceals every passion and

" world early enough to make it his *bubble*, at an " age when most people are the bubbles of the " world! for that is the common case of youth."

* Vide Letters 140 and 207.

† Vide Letter 151.—In this Letter his lordship quotes, from Lord Bacon, the distinction between *simulation* and *dissimulation*—" the last of which is " only to hide a man's own cards, whereas *simula-* " *tion* is put on in order to look into other people's." But does not the following account of his own management, which he recommends to his son as an example, come under the description of *simulation*? " I should desire nothing better in any negotiation, " than to have to do with one of these men of " warm, quick passions, which I would take care " to set in motion. By artful provocations I would " extort rash unguarded expressions; and, by hint- " ing at all the several things I could suspect, in- " fallibly discover the true one, by the alteration it " occasioned in the countenance of the person." Is

sentiment of his own heart, and takes advantage of those of others; whilst he sets no other bounds to his flattery, but those of the credulity of his companions, and lavishes every mark of attention and admiration, of kindness and good-nature, with no other motive or end but his own advantage. The favourite maxim which his lordship so often repeats, "* *Il volto sci-* "*olto, i pensieri stretti,*" he thinks as practicable as it is convenient; forgetting that an open countenance is the index nature gave to an open ingenuous heart; and that the best teacher can hardly bring a youth of nineteen to such perfection in hypocrisy, as to give his face and air the frankness proper to his age, and his mind the cunning and design of an old statesman.

not this to look into another man's cards? As a *minister* it may be *able conduct*, but as a *man* it is surely *detestable*.

* The countenance open, the thoughts close.

But, God be praised! we are not constituted to be the dupes of every shallow artifice; and a hypocrite under twenty has very little chance of making "*the world* "*his bubble.*"* Scarcely even the weakest of that sex which his lordship considers as far below rationality,† would be much charmed with a youth who had been tutored by his father to make love‡ *wherever he went*, because it was *cheaper* and *safer* to have an *arrangement* with a married woman of fashion, than to keep an opera

* Vide note pp. 14 and 15.

† Letter 129.

‡ Letter 242.—"Address yourself to some wo-"man of fashion and beauty *wherever you are*, and "try how far that will go. If the place be not se-"cured beforehand, and garrisoned, nine times in "ten you will take it." Sometimes his lordship directs him to address *two* at the same time; *one* as a Mad. l'Ursay, to instruct him in the art of pleasing, the *other* to exercise those arts upon. Mad. de Blot is chosen for this last office, on account of her perverse fidelity to her husband, "*tho' married above a* "*year.*"

girl. It is impossible to think of this in a moral light without a degree of horror, which obscures the ridicule of it. That such precepts should have been the instructions of a father to his son, and that they should be publicly offered to the youth of a nation where the sacredness of marriage and the bonds of family love are not yet entirely exploded, are indeed most alarming symptoms of corruption. The mean self-love, which is thus inculcated, at the expence of the most important interests of society, must shew itself through the whole man, in spite of the frippery in which his lordship would dress him. Elegance of mind can alone produce true elegance of behaviour. *Les manieres douces* belong to a gentle and good heart—*les manieres nobles* to a spirit of generosity, bravery, and truth.

"*Worth* makes the *man*, and want of it the *fellow*;
"The rest is all but leather or prunella." POPE.

ESSAY II.

ON CONVERSATION.

I HAVE always considered the universal practice of card-playing as particularly pernicious in this respect, that, whilst it keeps people perpetually in company, it excludes conversation. The hours which are spent in society may be made, not only the most agreeable, but perhaps the most useful of any, provided our companions are well chosen. But though this cannot always be the case, and though few persons are qualified to make a figure in conversation, or to give it all the advantage of which it is capable, yet, even amongst

those of moderate understanding and knowledge, it seems almost impossible that an evening should pass in mutual endeavours to entertain each other, without something being struck out that would in some degree enlighten and improve the mind. If we are not instructed by what we hear, we may at least derive some advantage from the exercise of our own powers, from being obliged to recollect and produce what we know or what we think on the topics which arise; and whilst the understanding is thus kept in action, though perhaps on subjects not very important, it is certainly more likely to acquire some vigour, than whilst its attention is confined to the management of a hand of cards. In the mean time our self-command may be improving by the exercise of politeness; which teaches us to offer our favourite opinions with modesty, to hear them controverted with good-humour, and to main-

tain them with moderation :—to listen with patient attention to a tedious or a well-known story—to answer an objection that is nothing to the purpose, and make some civil reply to an argument too confused to be understood. These are useful, though not very pleasant, exertions of benevolence and self-denial; and such utility may be derived even from those who can no otherwise contribute to our improvement.—Many more pleasing advantages one should expect to find in the company of persons of fashion and education.

But, alas! if one attends to the numerous abuses of conversation, and observes how often it offends against some of the first principles of morality, one is tempted to think that even card-playing, though it interests none but the most unlovely passions, is a less dangerous method of employing time.

Many are the natural temptations to of-

fences of the tongue, from which we are constantly in danger in all times and all places. But some of those which prevail in our present polite circles, seem to arise merely from the *ton* which has been imported to us from a neighbouring nation, where perhaps the same things may be natural and harmless, which, *in us*, are affected, and fruitful of bad consequences. Surely nothing can be less natural to the dry and reserved temper of the English, than that flow of unbounded flattery which seems the established commerce of the *grand monde*, but which, to a modest mind, unhardened by the constant use of it, is really quite overwhelming. That deep and affecting interest, with which a mere common acquaintance talks to you for half an hour of your slightest indisposition—those tender professions of affection and esteem—that admiration, which exhausts the language to express itself, are so

exceedingly uncongenial to an English heart (slow to expand itself, though warm and steady in real affection) that they never sit handsomely on us; and, though we may be pleased at the moment with the self-consequence given us, we soon feel a degree of disgust arising towards those from whom we receive it.

Another fashion, very inconvenient to a people naturally grave, is that of being always gay. Lively airs and diverting sallies are so essential in a fashionable company, that, if they cannot be kept up by harmless wit and humour, they must be produced by throwing an air of ridicule on the most important subjects, and the most respectable characters; not excepting the principles we profess to believe, or the persons we profess to esteem.

Thus, whilst we lavish our praise on those who are present (a practice which untaught nature would blush at) we derive

all our mirth from the absent, to whom we are not less liberal of abuse and ridicule (an injustice which every honest peasant would scorn.) Some are even shameless enough to begin their ridicule on those who have just quitted the room, and whom they have been grossly flattering; though it is so obvious, that the remaining part of the company, after having been fatigued with bowing to their compliments, must expect the same fate in their turn, as their carriages drive from the door.

Nothing is to me more disgusting than that air of mildness and benevolence with which some ill-natured observation on the person or dress of our absent acquaintance, or some sly sarcasm, designed to obscure the brightest part of their character, is usually introduced. If the defects of a lady's person are to be held forth to ridicule, it is first remarked, that "she is cer-"tainly the best kind of woman in the

"world." If one of distinguished talents is to be the victim, those talents are magnified and exalted in the strongest terms, and then in a lower voice you are called upon to take notice of the conscious superiority of her manner, the ostentatious display of her knowledge, or the pointed affectation of her wit. Some absurd saying, which envy had invented for her, is produced as a sample of her *bons mots*, and some trait of impertinence, though perhaps the most contrary to her character, related as a specimen of her behaviour.—When the lady * * * s have been extolled for their charity and goodness, I have heard it added, "that it is impossible to "pass through their hall without terrible "consequences, 'tis so full of company "from Broad St. Giles's—Mrs. * * * * is "confessedly the most pious creature upon "earth!—poor soul! she was carried to "church in an ague-fit last Sunday; for

"she thinks there is no going to heaven "without hearing Mr. *Such-a-one* preach "once a week." Thus, by the help of exaggeration, you may possibly succeed in raising a sneer against a plain person, or a bright understanding—against Christian beneficence, or rational piety; but as you profess the highest esteem for the characters you ridicule, nobody must say, that you are censorious or unfriendly.

Another heinous evil arises from the necessity of being *au fait*, with regard to every character and occurrence that is talked of. The word and thing called *sentiment* being exploded as perfectly ridiculous—all discussion of general topics being formal, tedious, and insufferable—and literary subjects pedantic and affected, there remains nothing, when you have done with public affairs and public diversions, but private anecdotes—pulling down, or gently undermining characters—sitting

in judgment on those transactions, which, though of a private nature, are, by the newly established custom of the times, laid before the public—or producing fresh accounts of them from private hands. I hardly ever heard a conversation of this kind carried on for half an hour, without some flagrant instance of slander and injustice. It is amazing to observe the courage with which, upon mere common report, facts are repeated, which tend to the utter ruin of a character, and even motives confidently assigned, which it was impossible should be known. I have heard things asserted as indisputable truths, with the air of a person who was behind the curtain and knew the whole, which I have afterwards detected to have been taken on trust from the newspapers.

The heaviest misfortunes will not shelter you from censure, when the conversation takes this turn. If you have lost your

dearest friend, we pity you indeed; but we cannot help observing, either that you have very little feeling, and do not grieve enough, or that you are highly blameable in feeling too much, and grieving too violently; or else that there is something very ridiculous in your manner of shewing your grief, or in some circumstances of your behaviour under it. If you are stripped of your whole fortune, 'tis a terrible thing to be sure; but it can't be dissembled, that your own imprudence was, in a great measure, the cause of it. If distemper or accident has disfigured your face or distorted your limbs, we can't help being diverted with the oddness of your figure—but, poor creature! we are excessively shock'd and concern'd at the same time.

If all the evil-speaking one hears was to be esteemed the effect of malice, one might sometimes fancy one's self in the infernal regions; but I sincerely believe, malice

has very seldom any share in it: the desire of keeping up or enlivening genteel conversation, with the want of rational knowledge, or the fear of being ridiculed for shewing the knowledge we have, is the general cause of those injuries we do our fellow-creatures in our common discourse.

But if the desire of being fashionable leads to many immoralities, one would expect it should at least preserve us from such as offend no less against the laws of politeness, than against those of religion and virtue. It is the boast of this age to have discovered, that true politeness consists, not in modes and ceremonies, but in entering with delicacy into the feelings of our companions, conforming to their inclinations, exalting them in their own opinions, and relieving them as much as possible from every restraint and anxiety: but how ill are these maxims observed towards those who have not yet learned the fa-

shionable indifference and levity on serious subjects! A young person educated in religious sentiments, and warm with the love of virtue, when first admitted into the circles of persons of character, thinks he cannot better recommend himself, than by taking some opportunity of expressing the sentiments he has been taught to revere: but how is he shocked and mortified, to find himself stared at and ridiculed, his gravity answered with contemptuous smiles, or received with a general silence, the distressful effect of which can only be conceived by those who have felt it! Sunk into the deepest confusion on finding himself so much too wise and good for his company, he soon determines no more to offend on that side: but would any of the most troublesome formalities of former ages have cost him a pain equal to this unmerited shame, or the constraint he must suffer in disguising his sentiments, and

enuring himself to the ridicule and contempt of what he had been used to hold most sacred? The present pain inflicted on him is a cruel outrage on good manners; but the consequences of it are far more injurious. Such an attack on a young man's sensibility is but too generally followed by the sacrifice of virtue to fashion; and he gradually adopts an air of disdain for all that should preserve him from corruption and ruin.

Refinement of sentiment in a young lady too often meets with a like fate. She has not the courage to assume a superior elegance of mind to those she converses with, who would only laugh at her pretensions; she must therefore, on pain of being treated as a romance heroine, learn to debase the pure lustre of virgin delicacy and refined sensibility; she must adopt the worldly notions, and the free, not to say licentious, manners of those who have al-

ready trod the round of public diversions, and have been hackneyed in the ways of the gay world; till from copying their external behaviour, she gradually reduces her mind to the same standard, and brings down every high thought, every delicate and ingenious sentiment, with which books and education had inspired her, to the *ton* of unfeeling dissipation.

Nor can we wonder that the modest timidity of youth should be thus borne down by the imposing air of the world, when we see that it has but too strong an effect even on well-principled and long-practised virtue. I believe I may appeal to the bosom of almost every man of religious principles, whose situation has obliged him to converse much with the world, whether he has not found it one of his hardest trials, to stem the torrent of custom, and endure the ridicule which awaits the testimony he is bound to give in

the cause of religion and virtue. Has he never been tempted to suppress that testimony, and to incur the danger of countenancing, by not opposing, contrary notions, rather than expose himself to suffer, or be obliged to resent, the contempt of those who esteemed themselves polite company—and who were really too well bred to have ridiculed his mistress, friend, or relation in his presence, though they could allow themselves to insult him on points still more interesting?

But, without formally attacking principles, the general tendency of conversation must conduce either to weaken or establish them. The more remote the cause is from the effect, the less are we on our guard against it; and the slowest method is perhaps the surest, to undermine religion and morality.

When we are told by our great Master, that "of every idle word we must give an

"account at the day of judgment," it is not to be imagined that he meant to confine our common conversation to serious and important subjects, or to condemn that innocent trifling, which necessarily makes so large a part of our communication with each other: he says not, that every idle word shall be accounted a fault, but only that an account must be given of it—that it shall be examined as to the tendency of it, whether it be good or bad, and as such be placed to the account of our good or evil conduct; for there is no part of our conversation so insignificant, as not to be tinctured, in some degree, by our principles and dispositions: none that has not some remote influence on the cause of virtue.

True religion gives an habitual sweetness and complacency, which produces genuine politeness, without injury to sincerity: it preserves the mind from every

unfair bias, and inclines it to temper justice with mercy in all its judgments upon others: by regulating our self-love, it prevents our sacrificing to vanity the good fame of a fellow-creature: it casts a pleasing light on every object, and inspires an air of contentment, of thankfulness and joy, which raises the spirits and promotes such an innocent cheerfulness of conversation, as may well compensate for the loss of that mirth which is founded on ill nature:—whilst superstition and irreligion equally dispose the mind to gloomy and uncomfortable views; to think hardly of persons and events; to consider life as a scene of confusion, and mankind as made up of fools and knaves, who prey on each other, and aggravate the common load of misery. Under these melancholy impressions, men contrive, by attributing the best actions to selfish motives, to level all distinctions of character, and conclude the whole race un-

der one dreadful sentence; a race which the superstitious man considers as under the wrath of its Maker, and as the proper subject of never-ending misery; while the infidel sees it under the less horrible, but dark and hopeless doom of annihilation: *he* perceives not a beneficent hand overruling the seeming disorders of this world, nor does his faint eye reach the distant prospect of immortal glory, which throws such an animating splendor on the whole scene of existence: his blessings are not heightened by gratitude, nor his sufferings mitigated by resignation; even his mirth is infected with bitterness. Whilst we laugh with Voltaire at the most heightened representation of human wickedness and misery, disregarded by Heaven, and terminating in eternal darkness, surely we must forget, that we also are men, and that this shocking scene is the poor all of existence which his gloomy philosophy allots us.

The different views of things which arise from different opinions concerning the moral government of the world, and the end of our being, cannot but affect the general tenor of conversation even on indifferent topics: a man may shew the bent of his mind in talking of a comedy or a piece of news; and the turn of thought he will introduce from these subjects will tend either to the improvement or corruption of his hearers.

If we accustom ourselves to reflect on the consequences of our words, and if we live under a sense of the duty of doing good to our fellow-creatures, and of forbearing to hurt them in any manner or degree, we shall soon find to how great a sum of good or evil our daily expence of idle words may amount. When we are considering what are the means of doing good entrusted to us, perhaps the sphere of conversation is seldom thought of; yet

surely it gives ample scope for the exertion of that active principle of beneficence in which true virtue consists; and it is a sphere of action, from which no station or circumstances can exclude us: there is not a man who drinks his pot of porter at the ale-house, but has somebody who looks up to his opinion, and whose manners and conduct may be influenced by his sentiments: how much then may be done by those whose understandings are held in any estimation among their acquaintance! "A "word spoken in season, how good is it!" what a deep and lasting impression does it sometimes make! especially from the lips of those whose rank, abilities, or attractions give them particular consideration. On the other hand, what diffusive evil may take its rise from a slighting word, or even from a shrug, or a smile!

A young gentleman of my acquaintance has assured me, that he never received so

much benefit from any sermon he ever heard, as from a reproof which he once received in conversation from a lady, who, when he had been talking on some subject rather licentiously, said "It is a sign "you did not overhear what lord L—— "said of you yesterday, or you would "never utter such sentiments." The gentleman, when he told it to me, added, "Whoever could be insensible to the "keenness of this reproof, and the flatter-"ing politeness with which it was tem-"pered, must be flayed (as they say of a "Russian) before he could be made to "feel." Its influence on him has probably continued to this day; for I never knew him give occasion for another reproof of the same nature.

The great and irresistible influence, which the choice of our company, as well as the mode of our own conversation, has on our habits of thinking and acting, and

on the whole form and colour of our minds, is a subject too common to be much enlarged upon; it cannot, however, be too deeply considered, as it seems the leading circumstance of our lives, and that which may chiefly determine our character and condition to all eternity.

ESSAY III.

ON ENTHUSIASM, AND INDIFFERENCE IN RELIGION.

It is an old observation, that nothing is so difficult as to preserve the human affections in the due medium between opposite extremes. This is so remarkably true in our religious sentiments, that whoever examines his own heart will probably be convinced, that, in every part of his life, he has been led too far, either towards enthusiasm or indifference.

I remember that when I was about fifteen years old, I was charmed with many of the doctrines of the Mystics. *Disinterested love of God, contempt of ourselves,*

and *indifference towards our own happiness*, appeared to me essential to the true spirit of religion; and such refinements on human nature were highly gratifying to my romantic turn of mind. I fancied myself exalted by these ideas to a high degree of perfection, and lamented and despised the unhappy state in which I had been before I became acquainted with these sublime religionists. But, as my reason gained strength, I discovered that there was no more reality in these my fancied sentiments than in my dreams, and that the sensations I had produced in my own heart were as entirely the effect of imagination, as the distress I felt in seeing a tragedy.

This self-delusion is common enough in many of the operations of our own minds, but perhaps in none more than in the ardours of devotion; which are often no other than the workings of a heated fancy, that, in a kind of frenzy, adds an unnatu-

ral force to our sentiments, and makes us undertake flights, of which human nature in its sober state is incapable.

It is true, that we cannot possibly exceed in the measure of our love to God, to whom reason, as well as revelation, directs us to offer the best of our affections, and from whom alone we can hope for that happiness which it is our nature incessantly to desire. But we may fancy that we love him more than we *do* or *can;* and measure that love, not by the rule himself has given us—by our obedience, and by our love to our fellow-creatures;—but by the strength of those factitious feelings which we have the art of raising in ourselves, and which can naturally be excited only by the senses or the imagination. God cannot be the proper object of such feelings, since he is not present either to our senses or our imaginations. Of him we can have no idea, since all our ideas are introduced by

our senses. We do indeed discover, by the deductions of reason, that there must be one self-existent Being possessing all perfection: we therefore accumulate all the good we are acquainted with, ascribing it to the Deity, with no other addition than the negation of all limits or imperfection. This we call an idea of God; but it is not properly such, for we are incapable of representing to our minds at once all possible excellencies, with infinity added to them. When we would contemplate the Supreme Being, we must trace his attributes one by one; and even thus we must gather from mere mortal things, our notions of those attributes. He is therefore the object and choice of our reason, rather than of our passions: and our contemplations of his divine perfections are rather fitted to produce sentiments of gratitude and reverential love, like those we feel towards a worthy parent, than such strong desires and

flaming raptures as the Mystics describe; who borrow their expressions from the most sensual kind of love. This *love of desire*, as they distinguish it, they would appropriate solely to the purest of all spirits, and leave for sensible objects only calm benevolence. Thus they undertake to change the nature our Maker has given us. They reject the title he has vouchsafed to take upon himself, of our *father*, and choose to style him their *spouse*, their *lover*. They profess to *feast* and *inebriate* themselves with his *charms*, whom they "neither have seen, nor can see," and of whom they can have no real idea: and to shut their hearts against the attractions of all sensible objects. They even undertake a kind of separation from themselves: they talk of self-annihilation—self-hatred—of being able to will their own eternal misery, if it should please God to will it!—in short, they enchant themselves with words void

of meaning, and with suppositions which a sound mind is incapable of admitting for a moment.

That the excellent Fenelon should have adopted such irrational expressions, would be inconceivable, if we did not know that the richness and strength of such an imagination, and the warmth of such a heart as his, will naturally prevail over reason, and hurry a man into the regions of extravagance, whenever his favourite object is in view.

But whatever absurdities may arise from the fancied ardors of enthusiasm, they are much less pernicious to the mind than the contrary extreme of coldness and indifference in religion. The spirit of chivalry, though it led to many romantic enterprises, was nevertheless favourable to true courage, as it excited and nourished magnanimity and contempt of danger; which, though sometimes wasted in absurd under-

takings, were of the greatest use on real and proper occasions. The noblest energies of which we are capable can scarcely be called out without some degree of enthusiasm, in whatever cause we are engaged; and those sentiments, which tend to the exaltation of human nature, though they may often excite attempts beyond the human powers, will however prevent our stopping short of them, and losing, by careless indolence and self-desertion, the greatest part of that strength with which we really are endued.

How common is it for those who profess (and perhaps sincerely) to believe with entire persuasion the truth of the gospel, to declare that they do not *pretend* to frame their lives according to the purity of its moral precepts! "I hope," say they, "I am guilty of no *great crimes*; but the "customs of the world in these times will "not admit of a conduct agreeable either

"to reason or revelation. I know the "course of life I am in is wrong; I know "that I am engrossed by the world—that "I have no time for reflection, nor for the "practice of many duties which I acknow- "ledge to be such. But I know not how "it is—I do not find that I *can* alter my "manner of living."—Thus they coolly and contentedly give themselves up to a constant course of dissipation, and a general *worthlessness* of character, which, I fear, is as little favourable to their happiness here or hereafter, as the occasional commission of crimes at which they would start and tremble. The habitual neglect of all that is most valuable and important, of children, friends, servants—of neighbours and dependants—of the poor—of God—and of their own minds, they consider as an excusable levity, and satisfy themselves with laying the blame on the manners of the times.

If a modern lady of fashion was to be called to account for the disposition of her time, I imagine her defence would run in this style:—"I can't, you know, be out of "the world, nor act differently from every "body in it. The hours are every where "late—consequently I rise late. I have "scarce breakfasted before morning visits "begin—or 'tis time to go to an auction, "or a concert—or to take a little exercise "for my health. Dressing my hair is a "long operation—but one *can't* appear "with a head unlike every body else. "One *must* sometimes go to a play, or "an opera; though I own it hurries one "to death. Then what with necessary vi-"sits—the perpetual engagements to card "parties at private houses—and attend-"ance on the public assemblies, to which "all people of fashion subscribe, the even-"ings you see are fully disposed of. What "time then can I possibly have for what

" you call domestic duties? You talk of
" the offices and enjoyments of friendship
" —alas! I have no hours left for friends!
" I must see them in a crowd, or not at
" all. As to cultivating the friendship of
" my husband, we are very civil when we
" meet; but we are both too much en-
" gaged to spend much time with each
" other. With regard to my daughters, I
" have given them a French governess,
" and proper masters—I can do no more
" for them. You tell me, I should instruct
" my servants—but I have not time to in-
" form *myself*, much less can I undertake
" any thing of that sort for *them*, or even
" be able to guess what they do with them-
" selves the greatest part of the twenty-
" four hours. I go to church, if possible,
" once on a Sunday, and then some of my
" servants attend me; and if they will not
" mind what the preacher says, how can *I*
" help it?—The management of our for-

" tune, as far as I am concerned, I *must*
" leave to the steward and housekeeper; for
" I find I can barely snatch a quarter of an
" hour just to look over the bill of fare when
" I am to have company, that they may not
" send up any thing frightful or old-fashion-
" ed.—As to the christian duty of charity,
" I assure you I am not ill-natured; and
" (considering that the great expence of
" being always dressed for company, with
" losses at cards, subscriptions, and public
" spectacles, leave me very little to dispose
" of) I am ready enough to give my money
" when I meet with a miserable object.
" You say, I should enquire out such, in-
" form myself thoroughly of their cases,
" make an acquaintance with the poor of
" my neighbourhood in the country, and
" plan out the best methods of relieving
" the unfortunate, and assisting the indus-
" trious. But this supposes much more
" time, and much more money than I have

" to bestow.—I have had hopes indeed
" that my summers would have afforded
" me more leisure; but we stay pretty
" late in town; then we generally pass se-
" veral weeks at one or other of the water-
" drinking places, where every moment is
" spent in public; and, for the few months
" in which we reside at our own seat,
" our house is always full, with a succes-
" sion of company, to whose amusement
" one is obliged to dedicate every hour of
" the day."

So here ends the account of that time which was given you to prepare and educate yourself for eternity?—yet you believe the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments. Ask your own heart what rewards you deserve—or what kind of felicity you are fitted to enjoy?—Which of those faculties or affections, which heaven can be supposed to gratify, have you cultivated and

improved?—If, in that eternal world, the stores of *knowledge* should be laid open before you, have you preserved that thirst of knowledge, or that taste for truth, which is now to be indulged with endless information?—If, in the society of saints and angels, the purest benevolence and most cordial *love* is to constitute your happiness, where is the heart that should enjoy this delightful intercourse of affection?—Has yours been exercised and refined to a proper capacity of it during your state of discipline, by the energies of generous friendship, by the meltings of parental fondness, or by that union of heart and soul, that mixed exertion of perfect friendship and ineffable tenderness, which approaches nearest to the full satisfaction of our nature, in the bands of conjugal love?—Alas! you scarce knew you had a heart, except when you felt it swell with pride, or flutter with vanity.—Has your

piety and gratitude to the Source of all good been exercised and strengthened by constant acts of praise and thanksgiving? Was it nourished by frequent meditation, and silent recollection of all the wonders he hath done for us, till it burst forth in fervent prayer?—I fear it was rather decency than devotion that carried you once a week to the place of public worship—and, for the rest of the week, your thoughts and time were so very differently filled up, that the idea of a Ruler of the Universe could occur but seldom, and then, rather as an object of terror than of hope and joy. How then shall a soul so dead to divine love, so lost to all but the most childish pursuits, be able to exalt and enlarge itself to a capacity of that bliss which we are allowed to hope for, in a more intimate perception of the divine presence, in contemplating more nearly the perfections of our Creator, and in

pouring out before his throne our ardent gratitude, love, and adoration?—What kind of training is the life you have passed through for such an immortality?

And dare you look down with contempt on those whom strong temptation from natural passions, or a train of unfortunate circumstances, have sunk into the commission of what you call great *crimes*?—Dare you speak peace to your own heart, because by different circumstances you have been preserved from them?—Far be it from me to wish to lessen the horror of crimes: but yet, as the temptations to these occur but seldom, whereas the temptations to neglect, and indifference towards our duty for ever surround us, it may be necessary to awaken ourselves to some calculation of the proportions between such habitual *omission* of all that is good, and the *commission* of more heinous acts of sin; between wasting our whole life in what is falsely called *innocent*

amusement, and disgracing it by faults which would alarm society more, though possibly they might injure it less.

How amazing is the distance between the extreme of negligence and self indulgence in such nominal christians, and the opposite excess of rigour which some have unhappily thought meritorious! between a Pascal (who dreaded the influence of pleasure so much, as to wear an iron, which he pressed into his side whenever he found himself taking delight in any object of sense) and those who think life lent them only to be squandered in senseless diversions, and the frivolous indulgence of vanity!—what a strange composition is man! ever diverging from the right line—forgetting the true end of his being—or widely mistaking the means that lead to it!

If it were indeed true, that the Supreme Being had made it the condition of our future happiness, that we should spend the days

of our pilgrimage here on earth in voluntary suffering and mortification, and a continual opposition to every inclination of nature, it would surely be worth while to conform even to these conditions, however rigorous: and we see, by numerous examples, that it is not more than human creatures are capable of, when fully persuaded that their eternal interests demand it. But if, in fact, the laws of God are no other than directions for the better enjoyment of our existence—if he has forbid us nothing that is not pernicious, and commanded nothing that is not highly advantageous to us—if, like a beneficent parent, he inflicts neither punishment nor constraint unnecessarily, but makes our good the end of all his injunctions—it will then appear much more extraordinary that we should perversely go on in constant and acknowledged neglect of those injunctions.

Is there a single pleasure worthy of a ra-

tional being, which is not, within certain limitations, consistent with religion and virtue?—And are not the limits, within which we are permitted to enjoy them, the same which are prescribed by reason and nature, and which we cannot exceed without manifest hurt to ourselves, or others? It is not the life of a hermit, or a *Père de la Trappe*, that is enjoined us: it is only the life of a rational being, formed for society, capable of continual improvement, and consequently of continual advancement in happiness.

Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are neither gloomy ascetics nor frantic enthusiasts.—They married from affection founded on long acquaintance and perfect esteem. They therefore enjoy the best pleasures of the heart in the highest degree. They concur in a rational scheme of life, which, whilst it makes them always cheerful and happy, renders them the friends of human

kind, and the blessing of all around them. They do not desert their station in the world, nor deny themselves the proper and moderate use of their large fortune; though that portion of it which is appropriated to the use of others, is that from which they derive their highest gratifications. They spend four or five months of every year in London, where they keep up an intercourse of hospitality and civility with many of the most respectable persons of their own, or of higher rank; but have endeavoured rather at a select than a numerous acquaintance; and as they never play at cards, this endeavour has the more easily succeeded. Three days in the week, from the hour of dinner, are given up to this intercourse with what may be called *the world*. Three more are spent in a family way, with a few intimate friends, whose tastes are conformable to their own, and with whom the book and working-table, or sometimes mu-

sic, supply the intervals of useful and agreeable conversation. In these parties their children are always present, and partake of the improvement that arises from such society, or from the well-chosen pieces which are read aloud. The seventh day is always spent at home, after the due attendance on public worship; and is peculiarly appropriated to the religious instruction of their children and servants, or to other works of charity. As they keep regular hours, and rise early, and as Lady Worthy never pays or admits morning visits, they have seven or eight hours in every day free from all interruption from the world, in which the cultivation of their own minds, and those of their children, the due attention to health, to economy, and to the poor, are carried on in the most regular manner.

Thus, even in London, they contrive, without the appearance of quarrelling with

the world, or of shutting themselves up from it, to pass the greatest part of their time in a reasonable and useful, as well as an agreeable manner. The rest of the year they spend at their family seat in the country, where the happy effects of their example, and of their assiduous attention to the good of all around them, are still more observable than in town. Their neighbours, their tenants, and the poor, for many miles about them, find in them a sure resource and comfort in calamity, and a ready assistant to every scheme of honest industry. The young are instructed at their expence, and under their direction, and rendered useful at the earliest period possible; the aged and the sick have every comfort administered that their state requires; the idle and dissolute are kept in awe by vigilant inspection; the quarrelsome are brought, by a sense of their own interest, to live more

quietly with their family and neighbours, and amicably to refer their disputes to Sir Charles's decision.

This amiable pair are not less highly prized by the genteel families of their neighbourhood, who are sure of finding in their house the most polite and cheerful hospitality, and in them a fund of good sense and good humour, with a constant disposition to promote every innocent pleasure. They are particularly the delight of all the young people, who consider them as their patrons, and their oracles, to whom they always apply for advice and assistance in any kind of distress, or in any scheme of amusement.

Sir Charles and Lady Worthy are seldom without some friends in the house with them during their stay in the country; but, as their methods are known, they are never broken in upon by their guests, who do not expect to see them till dinner-time, except at the hour of prayer and of break-

fast. In their private walks or rides, they usually visit the cottages of the labouring poor, with all of whom they are personally acquainted; and by the sweetness and friendliness of their manner, as well as by their beneficent actions, they so entirely possess the hearts of these people, that they are made the confidants of all their family grievances, and the casuists to settle all their scruples of conscience or difficulties in conduct. By this method of conversing freely with them, they find out their different characters and capacities, and often discover and apply to their own benefit, as well as that of the person they distinguish, talents, which would otherwise have been for ever lost to the public.

From this slight sketch of their manner of living, can it be thought that the practice of virtue costs them any great sacrifices? Do they appear to be the servants of a hard master?—It is true, they have not the

amusement of gaming, nor do they curse themselves in bitterness of soul, for losing the fortune Providence had bestowed upon them: they are not continually in public places, nor stifled in crowded assemblies; nor are their hours consumed in an insipid interchange of unmeaning chat with hundreds of fine people who are perfectly indifferent to them; but then, in return, the Being whom they serve indulges them in the best pleasures of love, of friendship, of parental and family affection, of divine beneficence, and of a piety, which chiefly consists in joyful acts of love and praise!—not to mention the delights they derive from a taste uncorrupted and still alive to natural pleasures; from the beauties of nature, and from cultivating those beauties joined with utility in the scenes around them; and, above all, from that flow of spirits, which a life of activity, and the constant exertion of right affections naturally produce. Com-

pare their countenances with those of the wretched slaves of *the world*, who are hourly complaining of fatigue, of listlessness, distaste, and vapours; and who, with faded cheeks and worn-out constitutions, still continue to haunt the scenes where once their vanity found gratification, but where they now meet only with mortification and disgust: then tell me which has chosen the happier plan, admitting for a moment that no future penalty was annexed to a wrong choice?—Listen to the character that is given of Sir Charles Worthy and his lady, wherever they are named, and then tell me, whether even your idol, *the world*, is not more favourable to them than to you.

Perhaps it is vain to think of recalling those whom long habits, and the established tyranny of pride and vanity, have almost precluded from a possibility of imitating such patterns, and in whom the very desire

of amendment is extinguished; but for those who are now entering on the stage of life, and who have their parts to choose, how earnestly could I wish for the spirit of persuasion—for such a "warning voice" as should make itself heard amidst all the gay bustle that surrounds them! it should cry to them without ceasing, not to be led away by the crowd of fools, without knowing whither they are going—not to exchange real happiness for the empty name of pleasure—not to prefer fashion to immortality—and not to fancy it possible for them to be innocent, and at the same time useless.

A LETTER

TO THE ADVENTURER.

*THE STORY OF FIDELIA.**

———Peccare docentes
Fallax historias monet. HOR.

To tint th' attentive mind she tries
With tales of exemplary vice.

TO THE ADVENTURER.

SIR,

I SHALL make no apology for the trouble I am about to give you, since I am sure the motives that induce me to give it will have as much weight with you as they have with me: I shall therefore, without further preface, relate to you the events of a life,

* The story of Fidelia made its first appearance in the Adventurer, Numbers 77, 78, 79.

which, however insignificant and unentertaining, affords a lesson of the highest importance; a lesson, the value of which I have experienced, and may therefore recommend.

I am the daughter of a gentleman of good family, who, as he was a younger brother, purchased, with the portion that was allotted him, a genteel post under the government. My mother died when I was but twelve years old; and my father, who was excessively fond of me, determined to be himself my preceptor, and to take care that my natural genius, which his partiality made him think above the common rank, should not want the improvements of a liberal education.

He was a man of sense, with a tolerable share of learning. In his youth he had been a free liver, and perhaps for that reason took some pains to become what is called a free-thinker. But whatever fashionable

frailties he might formerly have allowed in himself, he was now in advanced life, and had at least worldly wisdom enough to know, that it was necessary his daughter should be restrained from those liberties, which he had looked upon as trifling errors in his own conduct. He, therefore, laboured with great application to inculcate in me the love of order, the beauty of moral rectitude, and the happiness and self-reward of virtue; but at the same time professed it his design to free my mind from vulgar prejudices and superstition, for so he called REVEALED RELIGION. As I was urged to choose virtue, and reject vice, from motives which had no necessary connexion with immortality, I was not led to consider a future state either with hope or fear: my father, indeed, when I urged him upon that subject, always intimated that the doctrine of immortality, whether true or false, ought not at all to influence my

conduct or interrupt my peace; because the virtue which secured happiness in the present state, would also secure it in a future: a future state, therefore, I wholly disregarded, and, to confess a truth, disbelieved: for I thought I could plainly discover that it was disbelieved by my father, though he had not thought fit explicitly to declare his sentiments. As I had no very turbulent passions, a ductile and good disposition, and the highest reverence for his understanding, as well as the tenderest affection for him, he found it an easy task to make me adopt every sentiment and opinion which he proposed to me as his own; especially as he took care to support his principles by the authority and arguments of the best writers against CHRISTIANITY.—At the age of twenty, I was called upon to make use of all the philosophy I had been taught, by his death; which not only deprived me of a parent I most ardently loved,

but with him of all the ease and affluence to which I had been accustomed. His income was only for life, and he had rather lived beyond than within it; consequently, there was nothing left for me but the pride and helplessness of genteel life, a taste for every thing elegant, and a delicacy and ensibility that has doubled all my sufferi ngs. In this distress a brother of my mothe r's, who was grown rich in trade, received me into his house, and declared he would take the same care of me as if I had been his own child. When the first transports of my grief were abated, I found myself in an easy situation, and, from the natural chee r-fulness of my temper, I was beginning once more to taste of happiness. My uncle, who was a man of a narrow understanding and illiberal education, was a little disgusted with me for employing so much of my time in reading; but still more so, when, happening to examine my books, he found

by the titles that some of them were what he called blasphemy, and tended, as he imagined, to make me an atheist. I endeavoured to explain my principles, which I thought it beneath the dignity of virtue to disguise or disavow; but as I never could make him conceive any difference between a Deist and an Atheist, my arguments only served to confirm him in the opinion, that I was a wicked wretch, who, in his own phrase, believe neither God nor devil. As he was really a good man, and heartily zealous for the established faith, though more from habit and prejudice than reason, my errors gave him great affliction: I perceived it with the utmost concern; I perceived, too, that he looked upon me with a degree of abhorrence mixed with pity, and that I was wholly indebted to his good nature for that protection which I had flattered myself I should owe to his love. I comforted myself, however, with my own

integrity, and even felt a conscious pride in suffering this persecution from ignorance and folly, only because I was superior to vulgar errors and popular superstition; and that CHRISTIANITY deserved these appellations, I was not more convinced by my father's arguments than my uncle's conduct, who, as his zeal was not according to knowledge, was by no means qualified to "adorn the doctrine" which he professed to believe.

I had lived a few months under the painful sensibility of receiving continual benefits from a person whose esteem and affection I had lost, when my uncle one day came into my chamber, and after preparing me for some unexpected good fortune, told me, he had just had a proposal of marriage for me from a man to whom I could not possibly have any objection. He then named a merchant, with whom I had often been in company at his table. As the man

was neither old nor ugly, had a large fortune, and a fair character, my uncle thought himself sufficiently authorized to pronounce as he did, that I could not possibly have any objection to him. An objection, however, I had, which I told my uncle was to me insuperable; it was, that the person whom he proposed to me as the companion, the guide and director of my whole life, to whom I was to vow not only obedience but love, had nothing in him that could ever engage my affection: his understanding was low, his sentiments mean and indelicate, and his manner unpolite and unpleasing.—"What stuff is all this!" interrupted my uncle, "sentiments inde-
"licate! unpolite! his understanding, for-
"sooth, not equal to your own! Ah,
"child, if you had less romance, conceit,
"and arrogance, and more true discretion
"and prudence, it would do you more
"good than all the fine books you have

" confounded your poor head with, and
" what is worse, perhaps, ruined your
" poor soul. I own, it went a little against
" my conscience to accept my honest
" friend's kind offer, and give him such a
" pagan for his wife. But how know I
" whether the believing husband may not
" convert the unbelieving wife? As to
" your flighty objections, they are such
" nonsense, that I wonder you can suppose
" me fool enough to be deceived by them.
" No, child; wise as you are, you cannot
" impose upon a man who has lived as
" many years in the world as I have. I
" see your motive; you have some infidel
" libertine rake in your eye, with whom
" you would go headlong to perdition.
" But I shall take care not to have your
" soul to answer for as well as your per-
" son. Either I shall dispose of you
" to an honest man that may convert you,
" or you shall dispose of yourself how you

" please for me; for I disclaim all further
" care or trouble about you: so I leave
" you to consider, whether or no the kind-
" ness I have shewn you entitles me to
" some little influence over you, and whe-
" ther you chuse to seek protection where
" you can find it, or accept of the happy
" lot Providence has cut out for you."

He left me at the close of this fine harangue, and I seriously set myself to consider, as he bade me, which of the two states he had set before me I ought to chuse; to submit to a legal sort of prostitution, with the additional weight of perjury on my conscience, or to expose myself to all the distresses of friendless poverty and unprotected youth. After some hours of deliberation, I determined on the latter, and that more from principle than inclination; for though my delicacy would have suffered extremely in accepting a hus-

band, at least indifferent to me; yet as my heart was perfectly disengaged, and my temper naturally easy, I thought I could have been less unhappy in following my uncle's advice, than I might probably be by rejecting it: but then I must have submitted to an action I could not think justifiable, in order to avoid mere external distresses. This would not have been philosophical. I had always been taught, that virtue was of itself sufficient to happiness: and that those things which are generally esteemed evils, could have no power to disturb the felicity of a mind governed by the eternal rule of right, and truly enamoured of the charms of moral beauty. I resolved, therefore, to run all risques, rather than depart from this glorious principle; I felt myself raised by the trial, and exulted in the opportunity of shewing my contempt of the smiles or

frowns of fortune, and of proving the power of virtue to sustain the soul under all accidental circumstances of distress.

I communicated my resolution to my uncle, assuring him at the same time of my everlasting gratitude and respect, and that nothing should have induced me to offend or disobey him, but his requiring me to do what my reason and conscience disapproved; that supposing the advantages of riches to be really as great as he believed, yet still those of virtue were greater, and I could not resolve to purchase the one by a violation of the other; that a false vow was certainly criminal; and that it would be doing an act of the highest injustice, to enter into so solemn an engagement without the power of fulfilling it; that my affections did not depend on my own will; and that no man should possess my person, who could not obtain the first place in my heart.

I was surprised that my uncle's impatience had permitted me to go on thus far; but looking in his face, I perceived that passion had kept him silent. At length the gathering storm burst over my head in a torrent of reproaches. My reasons were condemned as romantic absurdities, which I could not myself believe; I was accused of designing to deceive, and to throw myself away on some worthless fellow, whose principles were as bad as my own. It was in vain for me to assert that I had no such design, nor any inclination to marry at all; my uncle could sooner have believed the grossest contradiction, than that a young woman could so strenuously refuse one man without being prepossessed in favour of another. As I thought myself injured by his accusations and tyranny, I gave over the attempt to mitigate his anger. He appealed to Heaven for the justice of his resentment, and against my ingratitude

and rebellion; and then giving me a note of fifty pounds, which he said would keep me from immediate indigence, he bade me leave his house, and see his face no more. I bowed in sign of obedience; and collecting all my dignity and resolution, I arose, thanked him for his past benefits, and with a low curt'sy left the room.

In less than an hour I departed with my little wardrobe to the house of a person who had formerly been my father's servant, and who now kept a shop and let lodgings. From hence I went the next day to visit my father's nephew, who was in possession of the family estate, and had lately married a lady of great fortune. He was a young gentleman of good parts, his principles the same as my father's, though his practice had not been quite agreeable to the strict rules of morality: however, setting aside a few of those vices which are looked upon as genteel accom-

plishments in young fellows of fortune, I thought him a good sort of man; and as we had always lived in great kindness, I doubted not that I should find him my friend, and meet with approbation and encouragement at least, if not assistance from him. I told him my story, and the reasons that had determined me to the refusal which had incurred my uncle's displeasure. But how was I disappointed, when, instead of the applause I expected for my heroic virtue, and unmerited persecutions, I perceived a smile of contempt on his face, when he interrupted me in the following manner! "And what, in the de-
"vil's name, my dear cousin, could make
"a woman of your sense behave so like
"an idiot? What! forfeit all your hopes
"from your uncle, refuse an excellent
"match, and reduce yourself to beggary,
"because truly you were not in love?
"Surely, one might have expected better

" from you even at fifteen. Who is it,
" pray, that marries the person of their
" choice? For my own part, who have
" rather a better title to please myself,
" with a good fifteen hundred a year,
" than you who have not a shilling, I
" found it would not do, and that there
" was something more to be sought after
" in a wife than a pretty face or a genius.
" Do you think I cared three farthings for
" the woman I married?—No, faith. But
" her thirty thousand pounds were worth
" having; with that I can purchase a se-
" raglio of beauties, and indulge my taste
" in every kind of pleasure. And pray
" what is it to me whether my wife has
" beauty, or wit, or elegance, when her mo-
" ney will supply me with all that in others?
" You, cousin, had an opportunity of
" being as happy as I am: the men, be-
" lieve me, would not like you a bit the
" worse for being married; on the con-

" trary, you would find, that for one who " took notice of you as a single woman, " twenty would be your admirers and " humble servants when there was no dan- " ger of being taken in. Thus you might " have gratified all your passions, made " an elegant figure in life, and have cho- " sen out some gentle swain as romantic " and poetical as you pleased for your " Cecisbee. The good John Trott hus- " band would have been easily managed, " and——" Here my indignation could be contained no longer, and I was leaving the room in disdain; when he caught me by the hand—" Nay, prithee, my dear " cousin, none of these violent airs. I " thought you and I had known one ano- " ther better. Let the poor souls, who " are taught by the priests and their nurses " to be afraid of hell-fire, and to think " they shall go to the devil for following " nature and making life agreeable, be as

" outrageously virtuous as they please:
" you have too much sense to be frighted
" at bugbears; you know that the term of
" our existence is but short; and it is
" highly reasonable to make it as pleasant
" as possible."—I was too angry to attempt confuting his arguments; but bursting from his hold, told him, I would take care not to give him a second opportunity of insulting my distress, and affronting my understanding; and so left his house with a resolution never to enter it again.

THE STORY OF FIDELIA

CONTINUED.

——*Propter vitam vivendi perdere causas.*

JUV.

Nor quit for life, what gives to life its worth.

I WENT home mortified and disappointed. My spirits sunk into a dejection, which took from me for many days all inclination to stir out of my lodging, or to see a human face. At length I resolved to try, whether indigence and friendship were really incompatible, and whether I should meet with the same treatment from a female friend, whose affection had been the principal pleasure of my youth. Surely,

thought I, the gentle Amanda, whose heart seems capable of every tender and generous sentiment, will do justice to the innocence and integrity of her unfortunate friend; her tenderness will encourage my virtue and animate my fortitude, her praises and endearments will compensate all my hardships. Amanda was a single woman of a moderate independent fortune, which I heard she was going to bestow on a young officer, who had little or nothing besides his commission. I had no doubt of her approbation of my refusing a mercenary match, since she herself had chosen from motives so opposite to those which are called prudent. She had been in the country some months, so that my misfortunes had not reached her ear till I myself related them to her. She heard me with great attention, and answered me with politeness enough, but with a coldness that chilled my very heart. "You are sensi-

"ble, my dear Fidelia," said she, "that I "never pretended to set my understand- "ing in competition with yours. I knew "my own inferiority; and though many "of your notions and opinions appeared "to me very strange and particular, I "never attempted to dispute them with "you. To be sure, you know best; but "it seems to me a very odd conduct for "one in your situation to give offence to "so good an uncle; first by maintaining "doctrines which may be very true for "ought I know, but which are very con- "trary to the received opinions we are "brought up in, and therefore are apt to "shock a common understanding; and "secondly, to renounce his protection, "and throw yourself into the wide world, "rather than marry the man he chose for "you; to whom, after all, I do not find "you had any real objection, nor any an- "tipathy for his person."—Antipathy, my

dear! said I; are there not many degrees between loving and honouring a man preferably to all others, and beholding him with abhorrence and aversion? The first is, in my opinion, the duty of a wife, a duty voluntarily taken upon herself, and engaged in under the most solemn contract. As to the difficulties that may attend my friendless, unprovided state, since they are the consequences of a virtuous action, they cannot really be evils, nor can they disturb that happiness which is the gift of virtue. "I am heartily glad," answered she, "that you have found the art of making "yourself happy by the force of imagina- "tion! I wish your enthusiasm may con- "tinue; and that you may still be further "convinced, by your own experience, of "the folly of mankind, in supposing po- "verty and disgrace to be evils."

I was cut to the soul by the unkind manner which accompanied this sarcasm, and

was going to remonstrate against her unfriendly treatment, when her lover came in with another gentleman, who, in spite of my full heart, engaged my attention, and for a while made me forget the stings of unkindness. The beauty and gracefulness of his person caught my eye, and the politeness of his address, and the elegance of his compliments, soon prejudiced me in favour of his understanding. He was introduced by the Captain to Amanda as his most intimate friend, and seemed desirous to give credit to his friend's judgment, by making himself as agreeable as possible.—He succeeded so well, that Amanda was wholly engrossed by the pleasure of his conversation, and the care of entertaining her lover and her new guest: her face brightened, and her good humour returned. When I rose to leave her, she pressed me so earnestly to stay dinner, that I could not, without discovering how much I resented

her behaviour, refuse. This, however, I should probably have done, as I was naturally disposed to shew every sentiment of my heart, had not a secret wish arisen there to know a little more of this agreeable stranger. This inclined me to think it prudent to conceal my resentment, and to accept the civilities of Amanda. The conversation grew more and more pleasing; I took my share in it, and had more than my share of the charming stranger's notice and attention. As we all grew more and more unreserved, Amanda dropt hints in the course of the conversation relating to my story, my sentiments, and unhappy situation. Sir George Freelove, for that was the young gentleman's name, listened greedily to all that was said of me, and seemed to eye me with earnest curiosity as well as admiration. We did not part till it was late, and Sir George insisted on attending me to my lodgings: I strongly re-

fused it, not without a sensation which more properly belonged to the female than the philosopher, and which I condemned in myself as arising from dishonest pride. I could not without pain suffer the polite Sir George, upon so short an acquaintance, to discover the meanness of my abode. To avoid this, I sent for a chair; but was confused to find that Sir George and his servants prepared to attend it on foot by way of guard: it was in vain to dispute; he himself walked before, and his servants followed it. I was covered with blushes, when, after all this parade, he handed me in at the little shop door, and took leave with as profound respect as if he had guarded me to a palace. A thousand different thoughts kept me from closing my eyes that night. The behaviour of Amanda wounded me to the soul: I found that I must look on her as no more than a common acquaintance; and that the world did

not contain one person whom I could call my friend. My heart felt desolate and forlorn; I knew not what course to take for my future subsistence; the pain which my pride had just given me, convinced me that I was far from having conquered the passions of humanity, and that I should feel too sensibly all the mortifications which attend on poverty. I determined, however, to subdue this pride, and called to my assistance the examples of ancient sages and philosophers, who despised riches and honours, and felt no inconveniences from the malice of fortune. I had almost reasoned myself into a contempt for the world, and fancied myself superior to its smiles or frowns; when the idea of Sir George Freelove rushed upon my mind, and destroyed at once the whole force of my reasoning.—I found that however I might disregard the rest of the world, I could not be indifferent to his opinion; and the thought of being

despised by him was insupportable. I recollected that my condition was extremely different from that of an old philosopher, whose rags, perhaps, were the means of gratifying his pride, by attracting the notice and respect of mankind: at least, the philosopher's schemes and wishes were very different from those which at that time were taking possession of my heart. The looks and behaviour of Sir George left me no doubt that I had made as deep an impression in his favour as he had done in mine. I could not bear to lose the ground I had gained, and to throw myself into a state below his notice. I scorned the thought of imposing on him with regard to my circumstances, in case he should really have had favourable intentions for me; yet to disgrace myself for ever in his eye, by submitting to servitude, or any low way of supporting myself, was what I could not bring myself to resolve on.

In the midst of these reflections I was surprised the next morning by a visit from Sir George. He made respectful apologies for the liberty he took; told me he had learnt, from my friend, that the unkindness and tyranny of an uncle had cast me into uneasy circumstances; and that he could not know that so much beauty and merit were so unworthily treated by fortune, without earnestly wishing to be the instrument of doing me more justice. He entreated me to add dignity and value to his life, by making it conducive to the happiness of mine; and was going on with the most fervent offers of service, when I interrupted him by saying, that there was nothing in his power that I could with honour accept, by which my life could be made happier, but that respect which was due to me as a woman and a gentlewoman, and which ought to have prevented such offers of service from a stranger, as could

only be justified by a long-experienced friendship; that I was not in a situation to receive visits, and must decline his acquaintance, which, nevertheless, in a happier part of my life, would have given me pleasure.

He now had recourse to all the arts of his sex, imputing his too great freedom to the force of his passion, protesting the most inviolable respect, and imploring on his knees, and even with tears, that I would not punish him so severely as to deny him the liberty of seeing me, and making himself more and more worthy of my esteem. My weak heart was but too much touched by his artifices, and I had only just fortitude enough to persevere in refusing his visits, and to insist on his leaving me, which at last he did; but it was after such a profusion of tenderness, prayers, and protestations, that it was some time before I could recal my reason enough to reflect on the

whole of his behaviour, and on my own situation, which compared, left me but little doubt of his dishonourable views.

I determined never more to admit him to my presence, and accordingly gave orders to be denied if he came again. My reason applauded, but my heart reproached me, and heavily repined at the rigid determination of prudence. I knew that I acted rightly, and I expected that that consciousness would make me happy; but I found it otherwise; I was wretched beyond what I had ever felt or formed any idea of; I discovered that my heart was entangled in a passion which must for ever be combated, or indulged at the expence of virtue. I now considered riches as truly desirable, since they would have placed me above disgraceful attempts, and given me reasonable hopes of becoming the wife of Sir George Freelove. I was discontented and unhappy, but surprised and disappointed

to find myself so, since hitherto I had no one criminal action to reproach myself with; on the contrary, my difficulties were all owing to my regard for virtue.

I resolved, however, to try still farther the power of virtue to confer happiness, to go on in my obedience to her laws, and patiently wait for the good effects of it. But I had stronger difficulties to go through than any I had yet experienced. Sir George was too much practised in the arts of seduction to be discouraged by a first repulse: every day produced either some new attempt to see me, or a letter full of the most passionate protestations and entreaties for pardon and favour. It was in vain I gave orders that no more letters should be taken in from him; he had so many different contrivances to convey them, and directed them in hands so unlike, that I was surprised into reading them contrary to my real intentions. Every time I stirred out

he was sure to be in my way, and to employ the most artful tongue that ever ensnared the heart of woman, in blinding my reason and awakening my passions.

My virtue, however, did not yet give way, but my peace of mind was utterly destroyed. Whenever I was with him, I summoned all my fortitude, and constantly repeated my commands that he should avoid me. His disobedience called for my resentment, and, in spite of my melting heart, I armed my eyes with anger, and treated him with as much disdain as I thought his unworthy designs deserved. But the moment he left me, all my resolution forsook me. I repined at my fate: I even murmured against the SOVEREIGN RULER of all things, for making me subject to passions which I could not subdue, yet must not indulge: I compared my own situation with that of my libertine cousin, whose pernicious arguments I had heard

with horror and detestation, who gave the reins to every desire, whose house was the seat of plenty, mirth, and delight, whose face was ever covered with smiles, and whose heart seemed free from sorrow and care. Is not this man, said I, happier than I am? And if so, where is the worth of virtue? Have I not sacrificed to her my fortune and my friends? Do I not daily sacrifice to her my darling inclination? Yet what is the compensation she offers me? What are my prospects in this world but poverty, mortification, disappointment and grief? Every wish of my heart denied, every passion of humanity combated and hurt, though never conquered? Are these the blessings with which HEAVEN distinguishes its favourites? Can the KING OF HEAVEN want power or will to distinguish them? or does he leave his wretched creatures to be the sport of chance, the prey of wickedness

and malice? Surely, no. Yet is not the condition of the virtuous often more miserable than that of the vicious? I myself have experienced that it is. I am very unhappy, and see no likelihood of my being otherwise in this world—and all beyond the grave is eternal darkness. Yet why do I say, that I have no prospect of happiness? Does not the most engaging of men offer me all the joys that love and fortune can bestow? Will not he protect me from every insult of the proud world that scoffs at indigence? Will not his liberal hand pour forth the means of every pleasure, even of that highest and truest of all pleasures, the power of relieving the sufferings of my fellow-creatures, of changing the tears of distress into tears of joy and gratitude, of communicating my own happiness to all around me? Is not this a state far preferable to that in which virtue has placed me? But what is virtue? Is not

happiness the laudable pursuit of reason? Is it not then laudable to pursue it by the most probable means? Have I not been accusing PROVIDENCE of unkindness, whilst I myself only am in fault, for rejecting its offered favours? Surely, I have mistaken the path of virtue: it must be that which leads to happiness. The path which I am in is full of thorns and briars, and terminates in impenetrable darkness; but I see another that is strowed with flowers, and bright with the sunshine of prosperity: this, surely, is the path of virtue, and the road to happiness. Hither then let me turn my weary steps, nor let vain and idle prejudices fright me from felicity. It is surely impossible that I should offend GOD, by yielding to a temptation which he has given me no motive to resist. He has allotted me a short and precarious existence, and has placed before me good and evil.—What is good but pleasure?

What is evil but pain? Reason and nature direct me to chuse the first, and avoid the last. I sought for happiness in what is called virtue, but I found it not: shall I not try the other experiment, since I think I can hardly be more unhappy by following inclination, than I am by denying it?

Thus had my frail thoughts wandered into a wilderness of error, and thus had I almost reasoned myself out of every principle of morality, by pursuing through all their consequences the doctrines which had been taught me as rules of life and prescriptions for felicity—the talismans of TRUTH, by which I should be secured in the storms of adversity, and listen without danger to the syrens of temptation—when in the fatal hour of my presumption, sitting alone in my chamber, collecting arguments on the side of passion, almost dis-

tracted with doubts, and plunging deeper and deeper into falsehood, I saw Sir George Freelove at my feet, who had gained admittance, contrary to my orders, by corrupting my landlady. It is not necessary to describe to you his arts, or the weak efforts of that virtue which had been graciously implanted in my heart, but which I had taken impious pains to undermine by false reasoning, and which now tottered from the foundation: suffice it that I submit to the humiliation I have so well deserved, and tell you, that, in all the pride of human reason, I dared to condemn, as the effect of weakness and prejudice, the still voice of conscience, which would yet have warned me from ruin; that my innocence, my honour, was the sacrifice to passion and sophistry; that my boasted philosophy, and too much flattered understanding, preserved me not from the lowest

depth of infamy, which the weakest of my sex with humility and religion would have avoided.

I now experienced a new kind of wretchedness. My vile seducer tried in vain to reconcile me to the shameful life to which he had reduced me, by loading me with finery, and lavishing his fortune in procuring me pleasures which I could not taste, and pomp which seemed an insult on my disgrace. In vain did I recollect the arguments which had convinced me of the lawfulness of accepting offered pleasures, and following the dictates of inclination: the light of my understanding was darkened, but the sense of guilt was not lost. My pride and my delicacy, if, criminal as I was, I may dare to call it so, suffered the most intolerable mortification and disgust, every time I reflected on my infamous situation. Every eye seemed to upbraid

me, even that of my triumphant seducer. O depth of misery! to be conscious of deserving the contempt of him I loved, and for whose sake I was become contemptible to myself.

THE STORY OF FIDELIA

CONCLUDED.

Quisnam igitur liber? Sapiens: sibi qui imperiosus;
Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent:
Responsare cupidinibus, contemnere honores
Fortis, et in seipso totus: teres atque rotundus,
Externi ne quid valeat per læve morari.

HOR.

Who then is free?—The wise, who well maintains
An empire o'er her herself: whom neither chains,
Nor want, nor death, with slavish fear inspire;
Who boldly answers to his warm desire;
Who can ambition's vainest gifts despise;
Firm in himself who on himself relies;
Polish'd and round who runs his proper course,
And breaks misfortune with superior force.

FRANCIS.

THIS was the state of my mind during a year which I passed in Sir George's house. His fondness was unabated for eight months of the time; and as I had no other object

to share my attention, neither friend nor relation to call off any part of my tenderness, all the love of a heart naturally affectionate centered in him. The first dawnings of unkindness were but too visible to my watchful eyes. I had now all the torments of jealousy to endure, till a cruel certainty put an end to them. I learnt, at length, that my false lover was on the brink of marriage with a lady of great fortune. I immediately resolved to leave him; but could not do it without first venting my full heart in complaints and reproaches. This provoked his rage, and drew on me insolence, which though I had deserved, I had not learnt to bear. I returned, with scorn which no longer became me, all the wages of my sin, and the trappings of my shame, and left his house in the bitterest anguish of resentment and despair.

I returned to my old lodgings: but un-

able to bear a scene which recalled every circumstance of my undoing, ashamed to look in the face of any creature who had seen me innocent, wretched in myself, and hoping from change of place some abatement of my misery, I put myself into a post-chaise, at two in the morning, with orders to the driver to carry me as far from town as he could before the return of night, leaving it to him to chuse the road.

My reason and my senses seemed benumbed and stupified during my journey. I made no reflections on what I was about, nor formed any design for my future life. When night came, my conductor would have stopped at a large town, but I bid him go on to the next village. There I alighted at a paltry inn, and dismissed my vehicle, without once considering what I was to do with myself, or why I chose that place for my abode. To say truth, I can give no account of my thoughts at this period of

time: they were all confused and distracted. A short frenzy must have filled up those hours, of which my memory retains such imperfect traces. I remember only, that without having pulled off my cloaths, I left the inn as soon as I saw the day, and wandered out of the village.

My unguided feet carried me to a range of willows by a river's side, where, after having walked some time, the freshness of the air revived my senses, and awakened my reason. My reason, my memory, my anguish and despair, returned together; Every circumstance of my past life was present to my mind; but most the idea of my faithless lover and my criminal love tortured my imagination, and rent my bleeding heart, which, in spite of all its guilt and all its wrongs, retained the tenderest and most ardent affection for its undoer. This unguarded affection, which was the effect of a gentle and kind nature, heightened the

anguish of resentment, and completed my misery. In vain did I call off my thoughts from this gloomy retrospect, and hope to find a gleam of comfort in my future prospects. They were still more dreadful: poverty, attended by infamy and want, groaning under the cruel hand of oppression and the taunts of insolence, was before my eyes. I, who had once been the darling and the pride of indulgent parents, who had once been beloved, respected, and admired, was now the outcast of human nature, despised and avoided by all who had ever loved me, by all whom I had most loved! hateful to myself, belonging to no one, exposed to wrongs and insults from all!

I tried to find out the cause of this dismal change, and how far I was myself the occasion of it. My conduct with respect to Sir George, though I spontaneously condemned, yet, upon recollection, I thought

the arguments which produced it would justify. But as my principles could not preserve me from vice, neither could they sustain me in adversity: conscience was not to be perverted by the sophistry which had beclouded my reason. And if any, by imputing my conduct to error, should acquit me of guilt, let them remember, it is yet true, that in this uttermost distress, I was neither sustained by the consciousness of innocence, the exultation of virtue, nor the hope of reward: whether I looked backward or forward, all was confusion and anguish, distraction and despair. I accused the Supreme Being of cruelty and injustice, who, though he gave me not sufficient encouragement to resist desire, yet punished me with the consequences of indulgence. If there is a God, cried I, he must be either tyrannical and cruel, or regardless of his creatures. I will no longer endure a being which is undeservedly miserable, either

from chance or design, but fly to that annihilation in which all my prospects terminate. Take back, said I, lifting my eyes to heaven, the hateful gift of existence, and let my dust no more be animated to suffering, and exalted to misery.

So saying, I ran to the brink of the river, and was going to plunge in, when the cry of some person very near me made me turn my eyes to see whence it came. I was accosted by an elderly clergyman, who, with looks of terror, pity, and benevolence, asked what I was about to do? At first I was sullen, and refused to answer him; but by degrees the compassion he shewed, and the tenderness with which he treated me, softened my heart, and gave vent to my tears.

"O! Madam," said he, "these are "gracious signs, and unlike those which "first drew my attention, and made me "watch you unobserved, fearing some fatal

" purpose in your mind. What must be
" the thoughts which could make a face
" like yours appear the picture of horror?
" I was taking my morning walk, and have
" seen you a considerable time; sometimes
" stopping and wringing your hands,
" sometimes quickening your pace, and
" sometimes walking slow, with your eyes
" fixed on the ground, till you raised them
" to heaven, with looks not of supplication
" and piety, but rather of accusation and
" defiance. For pity tell me how is it that
" you have quarrelled with yourself, with
" life, nay even with HEAVEN? Recal
" your reason and your hope, and let this
" seasonable prevention of your fatal pur-
" pose be an earnest to you of good things
" to come, of GOD's mercy not yet alie-
" nated from you, and stooping from his
" throne to save your soul from perdition."

The tears which flowed in rivers from my eyes while he talked, gave me so much

relief, that I found myself able to speak, and desirous to express my gratitude for the good man's concern for me. It was so long since I had known the joys of confidence, that I felt surprising comfort and pleasure from unburthening my heart, and telling my kind deliverer every circumstance of my story, and every thought of my distracted mind. He shuddered to hear me upbraid the DIVINE PROVIDENCE; and stopping me short, told me, he would lead me to one who should preach patience to me, whilst she gave me the example of it.

As we talked he led me to his own house, and there introduced me to his wife, a middle-aged woman, pale and emaciated, but of a cheerful placid countenance, who received me with the greatest tenderness and humanity. She saw I was distressed, and her compassion was beforehand with my complaints. Her tears stood ready to

accompany mine; her looks and her voice expressed the kindest concern; and her assiduous cares demonstrated that true politeness and hospitality, which is not the effect of art but of inward benevolence. While she obliged me to take some refreshment, her husband gave her a short account of my story, and of the state in which he had found me. "This poor "lady," said he, "from the fault of her "education and principles, sees every "thing through a gloomy medium: she "accuses PROVIDENCE, and hates her ex- "istence, for those evils which are the "common lot of mankind in this short "state of trial. You, my dear, who are "one of the greatest sufferers I have "known, are best qualified to cure her of "her faulty impatience; and to convince "her, by your own example, that this "world is not the place in which virtue "is to find its reward. She thinks no

" one so unhappy as herself; but if she
" knew all that you have gone through,
" she would surely be sensible, that if
" you are happier than she, it is only be-
" cause your principles are better."

" Indeed, my dear madam," said she,
" that is the only advantage I have over
" you; but that indeed outweighs every
" thing else. It is now but ten days since
" I followed to the grave my only son, the
" survivor of eight children, who were all
" equally the objects of my fondest love.
" My heart is no less tender than your own,
" nor my affections less warm. For a
" whole year before the death of my last
" darling, I watched the fatal progress of
" his disease, and saw him suffer the most
" amazing pains. Nor was poverty, that
" dreaded evil to which you could not sub-
" mit, wanting to my trials. Though my
" husband is by his profession a gentleman,

" his income is so small, that I and my
" children have often wanted necessaries:
" and though I had always a weakly con-
" stitution, I have helped to support my
" family by the labour of my own hands.
" At this time I am consuming by daily
" tortures, with a cancer which must
" shortly be my death. My pains, per-
" haps, might be mitigated by proper as-
" sistance, though nothing could preserve
" my life; but I have not the means to
" obtain that assistance."—O hold, inter-
rupted I, my soul is shocked at the enu-
meration of such intolerable sufferings.
How is it that you support them? Why
do I not see you, in despair like mine, re-
nounce your existence, and put yourself
out of the reach of torment? But above
all, tell me how it is possible for you to
preserve, amidst such complicated misery,
that appearance of cheerfulness and serene

complacency which shines so remarkably in your countenance, and animates every look and motion?

"That cheerfulness and complacency," answered the good woman, "I feel in my "heart. My mind is not only serene, but "often experiences the highest emotions "of joy and exultation, that the brightest "hopes can give." And whence, said I, do you derive this astonishing art of extracting joy from misery, and of smiling amidst all the terrors of pain, sorrow, poverty and death? She was silent a moment; then stepping to her closet, reached a BIBLE, which she put into my hands. "See there," said she, "the volume in "which I learn this art. Here I am taught, "that everlasting glory is in store for all "who will accept it upon the terms which "INFINITE PERFECTION has prescribed; "here I am promised consolation, assist-"ance, and support from the LORD OF

"LIFE; and here I am assured that my "transient afflictions are only meant to fit "me for eternal and unspeakable happi-"ness. This happiness is at hand. The "short remainder of my life seems but a "point, beyond which opens the glorious "prospect of immortality. Thus encou-"raged, how should I be dejected? Thus "supported, how should I sink? With "such prospects, such assured hopes, how "can I be otherwise than happy?"

While she spoke, her eyes sparkled, and her whole face seemed animated with joy. I was struck with her manner, as well as her words. Every syllable she uttered seemed to sink into my soul, so that I never can forget it. I resolved to examine a religion, which was capable of producing such effects as I could not attribute either to chance or error. The good couple pressed me with so much unaffected kindness, to make their little parsonage

my asylum till I could better dispose of myself, that I accepted their offer. Here, with the assistance of the clergyman, who is a plain, sensible, and truly pious man, I have studied the HOLY SCRIPTURES, and the evidences of their authority. But after reading them with candour and attention, I found all the extrinsic arguments of their truth superfluous. The excellency of their precepts, the consistency of their doctrines, and the glorious motives and encouragements to virtue which they propose, together with the striking example I had before my eyes of their salutary effects, left me no doubt of their divine authority.

During the time of my abode here, I have been witness to the more than heroic, the joyful, the triumphant death of the dear good woman. With as much softness and tenderness as ever I saw in a female character, she shewed more dauntless

intrepidity than the sternest philosopher or the proudest hero. No torment could shake the constancy of her soul, or length of pain wear out the strength of her patience. Death was to her an object not of horror but of hope. When I heard her pour forth her last breath in thanksgiving, and saw the smile of ecstasy remain on her pale face when life was fled, I could not help crying out in the beautiful language I had lately learned from the SACRED WRITINGS, "O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! "where is thy victory?"

I am now preparing to leave my excellent benefactor, and get my bread in a service, to which he has recommended me in a neighbouring family. A state of servitude, to which once I could not resolve to yield, appears no longer dreadful to me; that pride, which would have made it galling, CHRISTIANITY has subdued; though philosophy attempted it in vain. As a pe-

nitent, I should gratefully submit to mortification; but as a CHRISTIAN, I find myself superior to every mortification, except the sense of guilt. This has humbled me to the dust: but the full assurances, that are given me by the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD, of the DIVINE pardon and favour upon sincere repentance, have calmed my troubled spirit, and filled my mind with peace and joy, which the world can neither give nor take away. Thus, without any change for the better in my outward circumstances, I find myself changed from a distracted, poor, despairing wretch, to a contented, happy, grateful being; thankful for, and pleased with my present state of existence, yet exulting in the hope of quitting it for endless glory and happiness.

O! Sir, tell the unthinking mortals, who will not take the pains of enquiring into those truths which most concern them, and who are led by fashion and the

pride of human reason, into a contempt for the SACRED ORACLES of GOD; tell them these amazing effects of the power of CHRISTIANITY; tell them this truth, which experience has taught me, that "Though "VICE is constantly attended by misery, "VIRTUE itself cannot confer happiness in "this world, except it is animated with "the hopes of eternal bliss in the world to "come."

I am, &c.

FIDELIA.

A LETTER

TO

A NEW-MARRIED LADY.

INDEED, my dear young friend, you have highly obliged me by such a distinguishing mark of friendship and consideration, as that of finding time, on the most important day of your life, to inform me, with your own hand, of your marriage: an event most interesting to me, who wish your happiness with the sincerest ardour. You tell me you expect from me, not a letter of formal congratulation, but of serious

and friendly advice on the new situations and duties in which you are going to be engaged. You wish I could be always with you to watch and direct your conduct, and seem full of that salutary fear and distrust of your own prudence, which is the best security for youth and inexperience. Whilst you retain this, I may venture to answer for you, that you will not materially deviate from the paths of duty and happiness.

I am glad you are still to remain a few weeks under the paternal roof, which has hitherto sheltered you from every evil, and where you have seen examples only of good; but, from this scene of regularity and quiet cheerfulness, you will soon go to London, to become mistress of yourself and of a family, and to plunge at once into the hurry and bustle of a world to which you are almost a stranger. Thither will my anxious good wishes attend you;

for, on the manner of your first setting out depends more than you can possibly imagine.

I know you have not been brought up in modish principles, and that you do not at present consider marriage as a title to unbounded liberty and perpetual dissipation, instead of a solemn engagement to subjection and obedience, to family cares and serious employments. You will probably, indeed, meet with people who will endeavour to laugh you out of all such regards, and who will find something very ludicrous in the idea of authority in a husband. But, whatever your opinions may be on this head, it is certain that a man of Mr. B.'s generosity would be much mortified and distressed to find himself obliged to exert his authority in restraining your pleasures, particularly on his first setting out with you on the journey of life. He knows he should be universally condemned, as either

jealous or covetous, should he interfere to stem the torrent of dissipation, into which it will be the business of most of your acquaintance to see you fairly plunged; for well they know that when once you are drawn into the whirlpool, more than female strength is required to get out of it again. Curiosity and vanity will join their temptations. You have a new face and new finery to shew, new flattery to hear, and every fine place about town to see and to be seen in.

Alas! poor Mr. B.!—What chance have you for a moment's attention! and what a sudden end is here of all that dear domestic happiness to which you both looked forward with rapture a few weeks ago!—you have nothing for it but to engage as deeply in the same course, and leave to whining swains in the country all ideas of that union of heart, that sweet intercourse of tenderness and friendship of which "soft souls

"in love" are apt to dream, when they think of living with the object of their wishes.

Mr. B. chose you from affection only: the superiority of his fortune, and the large field of choice which that fortune, joined with his amiable person and character, secured to him, precludes the possibility of any other motive. I—who know the disinterestedness of your nature, and the perfect freedom of rejection which your parents have always allowed you—have not the least doubt that your preference of him was the genuine effect of a real attachment, without any bias from his riches. Youth is naturally disinterested, and your heart is hitherto uncorrupted. But, my dear, the mode of living, in this too civilized part of the world, leaves scarce a single trace of nature, and even youth now grows a stranger to tenderness and truth, and pursues wealth (as the means of gratifying vanity) with all the rapacity

of an old usurer. It is necessary, therefore, that you should prove to your husband the sincerity of your attachment, which he may justly doubt if he sees that your happiness arises from the enjoyment of his fortune rather than of him. By a reserved and moderate use of his indulgence, by always preferring his company, and that of his particular friends, to public diversions and assemblies, by studying his taste rather than your own, and making the gratification of it your highest pleasure, you must convince him that your heart is his own; a truth which should always appear in the general tenor of your conduct, rather than in professions, or in that officious parade of affection which designing women often substitute in the place of every genuine mark of tenderness and consideration.—Dean Swift,* in his coarse way, says very

* *Vide* Letter to a new married Lady.

sensible things on the subject of displaying affection, which, however, may safely be left to your own natural delicacy: *l'amour*, "*de sa nature, aime le secret;*" and a person of sensibility is always averse to shewing any passion or affection before those whose sympathy is not interested in it. An amiable author* of much more delicacy than the Dean, goes so far as to advise his daughters never to shew the extent of their love, even to their husbands; a precept which does no honour to his own sex, and which would take from ours its sweetest charms, simplicity and artless tenderness. A haughty and imperious woman, who desired an undue power over her husband, would indeed do wisely to keep him always in suspense, and conceal from him an affection which must increase his power and diminish her own; but a

* Dr. Gregory.—*Vide* Father's Legacy.

gentle and truly feminine nature has no such desires, and consequently needs no such arts. A modest heart may trust its genuine feelings with a husband who has generosity and delicacy, and who, like yours, is untainted with that base opinion of women, which a commerce with the worst of the sex always inspires.

Swift, (and almost every male writer on the subject) pronounces that the passion of love in men is infallibly destroyed by possession, and can subsist but a short time after marriage. What a dreadful sentence must this appear to you at this time! your heart, which feels its own affection increased, knows not how to support the idea of such a change in the beloved object: but, my dear friend, the God of Nature, who provided the passion of love as the incitement to marriage, has also provided resources for the happiness of this his own institution, which kind and uncorrupted natures will

not fail to find. It is not indeed intended that we should pass our lives in the delirium of passion: but whilst this subsides, the habit of affection grows strong. The tumult and anxiety of desire must of course be at an end when the object is secure; but a milder and more serene happiness succeeds, which in good hearts creates a tenderness that is often wanting amidst the fervors of violent passion. Before this palls, your business is to build the solid foundation of a durable friendship. This will best be done whilst the partiality of fondness places all your excellencies in the fairest point of view, and draws a veil over your defects. This season you should take care to prolong, as far as is possible, that habit and esteem may have time to take deep root: to this end you must avoid every thing that can create a moment's disgust towards either your person or your mind. Keep the infirmities of both out of

the observation of your husband more scrupulously than of any other man; and never let your idea in his imagination be accompanied with circumstances unpleasant or disgraceful. A mistress of a family cannot always be adorned with smiles. It will sometimes be incumbent on you to find faults, and human nature may sometimes fail of doing this with proper temper and dignity; therefore let it never be done in the presence of your husband. Do not disturb him with the detail of your grievances from servants or trades-people, nor with your methods of family management. But above all, let nothing of this kind embitter his meals when you happen to be tête-à-tête at table. In mixing with the world and its affairs, he will often meet with such things as cannot fail to hurt a mind like his, and which may sometimes affect his temper. But when he returns to his own house, let him there find every

thing serene and peaceful, and let your cheerful complacency restore his good humour, and quiet every uneasy passion.

Endeavour to enter into his pursuits, catch his taste, improve by his knowledge; nor let any thing that is interesting to him appear a matter of indifference to you. Thus will you make yourself delightful to him as a companion and friend, in whom he may be always sure to find that sympathy which is the grand cement of friendship. But if you affect to speak of his pursuits as beyond your capacity or foreign to your taste, you can be no longer pleasing to him in that light, and must rely merely on your personal attractions, of which, alas, time and familiarity must every day impair the value. When you are in the country, perhaps you may sometimes find hours, and even days for each other's society, without any other company: in this case, conversation will

hardly supply sufficient entertainment; and, next to displeasing or disgusting him, you should of all things dread his growing dull and weary in your company. If you can prevail upon him to read with you, to practise music with you, or to teach you a language or a science, you will then find amusement for every hour; and nothing is more endearing than such communications. The improvements and accomplishments you gain from him will be doubly valuable in his esteem; and certainly you can never acquire them so agreeably as from his lips. And though you should not naturally be disposed to the same taste in reading or amusement, this may be acquired by habit, and by a hearty desire of conforming to his inclinations and sharing in his pleasures. With such a master you will find your understanding enlarge, and your taste refine to a degree far beyond your expectations; and the sweet reward

of his praises will inspire you with such spirit and diligence as will easily surmount any natural inaptitude.

Your behaviour to his particular friends and near relations will have the most important effects on your mutual happiness. If you do not adopt his sentiments with regard to these, your union must be very incomplete, and a thousand disagreeable circumstances will continually arise from it. I am told that he is an excellent son to a mother, who, with many good qualities, has defects of temper which determined him to decline her continuing to live with him after his marriage. In this he is equally kind and prudent; for though he could himself meritoriously bear with failings to which he had been accustomed from his infancy, in a parent who doats upon him, yet this would have been too hard a task upon you, who have not an equal affection to support your duty, and

to whom her ways would have been new and unusual. But though I thus far highly approve his consideration for you, yet you must remember how great a part of her happiness she is thus deprived of on your account, and make her all the amends in your power by your own attentions, as well as by promoting opportunities of indulging her in the company of her son. It would be a grievous charge on your conscience, if through your means he should become less observant of her, or diminish aught of that duty and affection which has hitherto so amiably distinguished him. Be careful therefore that no dispute may ever happen between this lady and yourself, no complaint from either of you disturb his peace, to whom it would be so painful and unnatural to take part against either. Be armed against the sallies of her temper, and predetermined never to quarrel with her, whatever she may say or do. In such

a relationship, this conduct would not be meanness but merit; nor would it imply any unworthy compliance or false assent; since silence and good-humoured steadiness may always preserve sincerity in your conversation, and proper freedom in your conduct. If she should desire to control your actions, or to intermeddle in the affairs of your family, more than you think is reasonable, hear her advice with patience, and answer with respect, but in a manner that may let her see you mean to judge of your own duties for yourself. "I will consider of what you are so good "to observe to me.——I will endeavour to "rectify whatever is amiss"—or some such general answer, will probably for the time put a stop to her attempts of this kind.

Great care must be taken to proportion at least your outward regards with equity and good breeding between your husband's relations and your own. It would be hap-

py if your feelings could be almost the same to both: but whether they are so or not, you are bound by duty and prudence to cultivate as much as possible the good-will and friendship of the family into which you are now adopted, without prejudice to that affection and gratitude in which I am sure you can never be wanting towards your own.

If it is an important duty to avoid all dissentions and disobligations with those who are nearly connected with your husband, of how much greater consequence is it to avoid all occasions of resentment between yourselves? Whatever may be said of the quarrels of *lovers*, believe me those of married people have always dreadful consequences, especially if they are not very short and very slight. If they are suffered to produce bitter or contemptuous expressions, or betray an habitual dislike in one party of any thing in the person or

mind of the other, such wounds can scarcely ever be thoroughly healed: and though regard to principle and character lays the married couple under a necessity to make up the breach as well as they can, yet is their affiance in each other's affection so rudely shaken in such conflicts, that it can hardly ever be perfectly fixed again. The painful recollection of what is past, will often intrude upon the tenderest hours, and every trifle will awaken and renew it. You must *even now* be particularly on your guard against this source of misery. A new-married pair, from their very excess of fondness, sometimes give way to little jealousies and childish quarrels, which at first, perhaps, quickly end in the renewal and increase of tenderness, but, if often repeated, they lose these agreeable effects, and soon produce others of a contrary nature. The dispute grows every time more serious—jealousies and distrusts

take deeper root—the temper is hurt on both sides—habits of sourness, thwarting, and mutual misconstruction prevail, and soon overpower all that tenderness which originally gave them birth. Keep it then constantly in mind, that the happiness of marriage depends entirely upon a solid and permanent friendship, to which nothing is more opposite than jealousy and distrust. Nor are they less at variance with the true interests of passion. You can never be a gainer by taxing your husband's affection beyond its natural strength; the fear of alarming your jealousy, and bringing on a quarrel, may force him to feign a greater fondness than he feels; but this very effort and constraint will in fact diminish, and by degrees extinguish that fondness. If therefore he should appear less tender or attentive than you wish, you must either awaken his passion by displaying some new grace—some winning charm of sweetness

and sensibility, or else conform (at least in appearance) to that rate of tenderness which his example prescribes; for it is your part rather modestly to follow as he leads, than make him feel the uneasiness of not being able to keep pace with you. At least one may pronounce that there is nothing less likely to increase affection than ill-humour and captiousness. The truth is, that pride rather than tenderness usually occasions the unreasonable expectations of an exceptious person, and it is rewarded as it deserves, with mortifications, and the cold dislike of those who suffer from it.

I am unwilling to sadden your present halcyon days, and the fair prospect of happiness before you, by supposing the possibility of any proper cause of jealousy—any real unkindness or infidelity on the part of Mr. B. As far as the human character can be known and relied on, you have reason to think yourself secure from this heaviest of

calamities; and nothing but irresistible proof, unsought for, and obtruded upon your senses, should ever shake your confidence and esteem. If this were to happen—if my dear tender friend should be doomed to the heart-breaking trial of seeing those looks of love changed into

> "—— hard Unkindness' alter'd eye,
> That mocks the tear it forc'd to flow:"
>
> GRAY.

What must then be your resource?—— Not rage and exclamation——not sullenness and pride——not an appeal to the world, which would laugh at your complaints—nor even to your friends, who cannot help you, unless by a separation, which would publish and complete your misfortune!—The comforts and helps of religion, with a firm resolution not to be driven out of the path of duty, can alone support you under such a sorrow. The only hope

of removing the cause of it must be derived from time and future contingencies, which you will watch for and improve. Sickness or disappointment may give him opportunity for reflection, and for observing the merit of that silent patience, the dignity of that uniform adherence to your duty which must force his esteem, and may at length regain his heart. If not, yours will of course be cured of the exquisite pain of unrequited love, which cannot very long subsist in a mind of any dignity or strength. If you have children, they will supply the "aching void" with a passion not less lively than that which you will have subdued; for their sakes life will still be valuable to you, and entertained with cheerfulness.—But let me hasten from a subject so unsuitable to your present situation, and to your most reasonable hopes.

I cannot but flatter myself that ladies are mightily improved since the time when

Dean Swift (writing on the same occasion that I do now) exhorts his fair pupil to make no friendships with any of her own sex. This is, in effect, forbidding her to make any friendships at all; for the world, with very good reason, tolerates no male friends at your age, excepting your nearest relations. The rules of decorum, in such points, are founded on a knowledge of human nature, which young women cannot have attained, and are therefore apt to despise such rules, as founded on base ideas of the nature of friendship, or of the hearts that entertain it. But one would have supposed that the Dean had lived long enough in the world, and thought ill enough of mankind to have been convinced of the impropriety of a young lady's making her strictest intimacies and confidential attachments with persons of the other sex. But, setting aside the danger to her reputation, and even to her morals, surely a woman

who despised her own sex, and would converse with none but men, would be not less ridiculous than a man who should pass his whole time among women. Like the monkey in the fable, she would stand a chance of being rejected and disowned by both species. The reasons the Dean gives for this preposterous advice, if ever founded in truth, are certainly so no longer. You may find advantages in the conversation of many ladies, if not equal to those which men are qualified to *give*, yet equal at least to what *you*, *as a female*, are capable of *receiving*. Yet in one point the Dean and I agree; in recommending your husband to be your first and dearest friend, and his judgment to be consulted in the choice of every new one you may hereafter make. Those you already possess are, I believe, secure of some portion of his esteem, and he is too much interested in your constancy and fidelity of heart, to

wish you to be fickle towards them. I shall therefore depend on his full consent to my having always the pleasure of styling myself

Your faithful

And affectionate friend,

H. CHAPONE.

POEMS.

WRITTEN DURING A VIOLENT STORM AT MIDNIGHT, 1749.

In gloomy pomp whilst awful midnight reigns,
And wide o'er earth her mournful mantle spreads,
Whilst deep-voic'd thunders threaten guilty heads,
And rushing torrents drown the frighted plains,
And quick-glanc'd lightnings to my dazzled sight
Betray the double horrors of the night;

A solemn stillness creeps upon my soul,
And all its pow'rs in deep attention die;
My heart forgets to beat; my stedfast eye
Catches the flying gleam; the distant roll,
Advancing gradual, swells upon my ear
With louder peals, more dreadful as more near.

Awake, my soul, from thy forgetful trance!
The storm calls loud, and Meditation wakes;
How at the sound pale Superstition shakes,
Whilst all her train of frantic Fears advance!
Children of Darkness, hence, fly far from me!
And dwell with Guilt and Infidelity!

But come, with look compos'd and sober pace,
Calm Contemplation, come! and hither lead
Devotion, that on earth disdains to tread;
Her inward flame illumes her glowing face,
Her upcast eye, and spreading wings, prepare
Her flight for heav'n, to find her treasure there.

She sees, enraptur'd, thro' the thickest gloom,
Celestial beauty beam, and, 'midst the howl
Of warring winds, sweet music charms her soul;
She sees, while rifted oaks in flames consume,
A Father-God, that o'er the storm presides,
Threatens, to save, and loves, when most he chides.

OCCASIONED BY READING

SONNETS

WRITTEN IN THE STYLE AND MANNER OF SPENSER, BY

T. EDWARDS, ESQ. 1749.

Blest Bard! to whom the Muses, grateful, gave
That pipe which erst their dearest Spenser won,
As once they found thee, pensive and alone,
Strewing sweet flow'rs upon his hallow'd grave;
Then bade thy fancy glow with sacred fire,
And softest airs thy rural verse inspire.

Again the elfin Faies and Sylphids come,
At dusky eve, or in the moonlight pale,
To the accustom'd mead, or shadowy dale,
Or where the wild wood sheds a browner gloom,
Where oft, unseen, they listen'd to the lay
Of their lov'd Colin-clout, till peep of day.

Once more they listen, while with mimic hand
Thou tun'st his rustic reed; and oft their feet,
Charm'd by thy simple verse and music sweet,
Forget the dance, and all in silence stand;
They hush the breeze, and chide the brook to peace,
And Philomel is mute till Damon cease.

But most thy strains my raptur'd spirits raise,
When love of virtue prompts thy tuneful tongue;
When *Richardson's lov'd name adorns thy song,
What honest heart but echoes back thy praise!
Sing on, sweet bard! prolong the darling theme!
Hush'd be the breeze! and mute the bab'ling stream!

Fain would I, shepherd, catch the pleasing note,
And vainly try to learn thy wond'rous skill;
So the young linnet, when with varied trill
The woodlark shakes his wildly-warbling throat,
Delighted flutters quick her trembling wing,
Tries her weak voice, and twitt'ring, aims to sing.

* Mr. Samuel Richardson, Author of Clarissa, and of Sir Charles Grandison.

SONNET TO MISS MULSO,

IN ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

BY T. EDWARDS, ESQ.

Sweet Linnet, who from off the laurel spray
That hangs o'er Spenser's ever sacred tomb,
Pour'st out such notes as strike the Woodlark dumb,
And vie with Philomel's enchanting lay;

How shall my verse thy melody repay?
If my weak voice could reach the age to come,
Like Colin Clout's, thy name should ever bloom
Through future times, unconscious of decay:

But my frail aid thy merits not require;
Thee Polyhymnia, in the roseate bow'rs
Of high Parnassus, 'midst the vocal throng
Shall glad receive, and to her tuneful sire
Present, where, crown'd with amaranthine flow'rs,
The raptur'd choir shall listen to thy song.

TO HEALTH.

O HEALTH! thou friend of Nature! Goddess blythe,
That oft upon the Uplands bleak art seen,
Printing with nimble step the dewy green.
To help the early mower whet his scythe,
Or with the jocund swain partake the toil
To press the plough, and break the stubborn soil;

Ah, wherefore dost thou fly me, nymph divine?
With youth and Innocence thou lov'st to dwell,
And gentle Peace, soft whisp'ring, "all is well!"
Youth, Innocence, and gentle Peace are mine;
Nor sacred Friendship to my heart denies
Her richest treasures, and her sweetest joys.

No boist'rous passion shook my troubled frame,
To fright thee from my breast, nor pining Care,
Nor rankling Envy ever fester'd there,
Nor did Intemp'rance e'er my blood inflame;
And Grief, tho' long an inmate of my mind,
To Hope and Cheerfulness her place resign'd.

O Health, thy Napier calls, well-skill'd to save,
Foe of thy foes, and friend of human race,
Whose potent hand the tyrant Pain can chase,
And pale Disease, that points an op'ning grave;
Nor thou, ungrateful, can'st to him deny,
Thy glad return, fresh source of springing joy!.

Without thee, Virtue's self forgets to smile,
And suff'ring saints with heav'n in view complain;
Philosophy, and Stoic pride how vain,
To stifle anguish, or the sense beguile!
Yet thou art often to the good unkind,
Like Fortune partial, and to merit blind.

Hast thou not left a Richardson unblest?
He woos thee still in vain, relentless maid!
Tho' skill'd in sweetest accents to persuade,
And wake soft Pity in a savage breast.
Him Virtue loves, and brightest Fame is his,
Smile thou too, Goddess, and complete his bliss.

But if regardless thou can'st hear *him* sigh,
Shall *I* not silence my presumptuous plea!
To him obdurate, wilt thou yield to me?
Ah no!—to thee, mild Patience, I'll apply,
Affliction's nurse! hear thou my humbler pray'r,
And teach, the ills I may not shun, to bear!

TO A ROBIN-REDBREAST.

Dear social bird! that giv'st with fearless love
Thy tender form to man's protecting care,
Pleas'd, when rude tempests vex the ruffled air,
For the warm roof to leave the naked grove;

Kindest and last of Summer's tuneful train!
Ah! do not yet give o'er thy plaintive lay;
But charm soft Zephyr to a longer stay,
And oft renew thy sweetly parting strain.

So when rough Winter frowns with brow severe,
And chilling blasts shall strip the shelt'ring trees,
When meagre Want thy shiv'ring frame shall seize,
And Death, with dart uplifted, hover near,
My grateful hand the lib'ral crumbs shall give,
My bosom warm thee, and my kiss revive.

TO STELLA.

No more, my Stella, to the sighing shades,
Of blasted hope and luckless love complain;
But join the sports of Dian's careless maids,
And laughing Liberty's triumphant train.

And see, with these is holy Friendship found,
With crystal bosom open to the sight;
Her gentle hand shall close the recent wound,
And fill the vacant heart with calm delight.

Nor Prudence slow, that ever comes too late,
Nor stern-brow'd Duty, check her gen'rous flame;
On all her footsteps Peace and Honour wait,
And Slander's ready tongue reveres her name.

Say, Stella, what is Love, whose tyrant pow'r
Robs Virtue of content, and Youth of joy?
What nymph or goddess, in a fatal hour,
Gave to the world this mischief-making boy?

By lying bards in forms so various shewn,
Deck'd with false charms or arm'd with terrors vain,
Who shall his real properties make known,
Declare his nature, and his birth explain.

Some say of Idleness and Pleasure bred,
The smiling babe on beds of roses lay,
There, with sweet honey dews by Fancy fed,
His blooming beauties open'd to the day.

His wanton head with fading chaplets bound,
Dancing, he leads his silly vot'ries on
To precipices deep o'er faithless ground,
Then laughing flies, nor hears their fruitless moan.

Some say from Etna's burning entrails torn,
More fierce than tigers on the Libyan plain,
Begot in tempests, and in thunders born,
Love wildly rages like the foaming main.

With darts and flames some arm his feeble hands,
His infant brow with regal honours crown;
Whilst vanquish'd Reason, bound with silken bands,
Meanly submissive, falls before his throne.

Each fabling poet sure alike mistakes
The gentle power that reigns o'er tender hearts!
Soft love no tempest hurls, nor thunder shakes,
Nor lifts the flaming torch, nor poison'd darts.

Heav n-born, the brightest seraph of the sky,
For Eden's bow'r he left his blissful seat,
When Adam's blameless suit was heard on high,
A beauteous Eve first cheer'd his lone retreat.

At Love's approach all earth rejoic'd, each hill,
Each grove that learnt it from the whisp'ring gale;
Joyous the birds their liveliest chorus fill,
And richer fragrance breathes in ev'ry vale.

Well pleas'd in Paradise awhile he roves,
With Innocence and Friendship, hand in hand;
Till Sin found entrance in the with'ring groves,
And frighted Innocence forsook the land.

But Love, still faithful to the guilty pair,
With them was driv'n amidst a world of woes,
Where oft he mourns his lost companion dear,
And trembling flies before his rigid foes.

Honour, in burnish'd steel completely clad,
And hoary Wisdom, oft against him arm;
Suspicion pale, and Disappointment sad,
Vain Hopes and frantic Fears his heart alarm.

Fly then, dear Stella, fly th' unequal strife,
Since Fate forbids that Peace should dwell with Love!
Friendship's calm joys shall glad thy future life,
And Virtue lead to endless bliss above.

TO ASPASIA,

IN ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING.

BY *MISS H*******.

Wisdom, Aspasia, by thy gentle Muse,
Warns me to shun the dang'rous paths of Love,
And rather those of sober Friendship chuse,
With cheerful Liberty, in Dian's grove.

Yet, led by Fancy through deceitful ground,
Oft have I Friendship sought, but sought in vain;
Unfaithful friends with myrtle wreaths I crown'd,
Unpleasing subjects of my plaintive strain.

In youthful innocence, a school-day friend
First gain'd my sister-vows; unhappy maid!
How did I wipe thy tears, thy griefs attend,
And how was all my tenderness repaid!

* Now Mrs. D*******, to whose kindness Mrs. Chapone is indebted for the liberty of inserting here this elegant answer to the Ode to Stella.

No sooner Grandeur, Love, and Fortune smil'd,
Than base Ingratitude thy heart betrays,
That friend forgot, who all thy woes beguil'd,
Lost in the sunshine of thy prosp'rous days.

Save me, kind Heav'n, from smiling Fortune's power!
And may my wishes never meet success,
If e'er I can forget, one single hour,
The friend who gave me comfort in distress!

Yet Friendship's influence I again implor'd,
To heal the wounds by Disappointment made;
Friendship my soul to balmy Peace restor'd,
And sent a gentle virgin to my aid.

Soft, modest, pensive, melancholy Fair,
She seem'd to Love and pining Grief a prey;
I saw her fading cheek, and fear'd Despair
Fed on her heart and stole her life away.

But ah! how chang'd my friend! how vain my fears!
Not Death, but Hymen, stole her from my heart;
Another love dispell'd her sighs and tears,
And fame was left the secret to impart.

Not twice the changing moon her course had run
Since first the pleasing youth was seen and lov'd,
The fair in secret haste he woo'd and won,
No friend consulted, for no friend approv'd.

Suspense not long my anxious bosom pain'd,
My friend arriv'd—I clasp'd her to my breast,
I wept, I smil'd, alternate passions reign'd,
Till she the sad unwelcome tale confess'd.

Lost to her brother, country, and to me,
A stranger wafts her to a foreign shore,
She travels mountains, and defies the sea,
Nor thinks of Albion or of Stella more.

Sure Nature in her weakest, softest mould,
Form'd my unhappy heart, False Friendship's prey!
Another story yet remains untold,
Which fond Compassion bids be not display:

The lovely sister of a faithless friend
Weeping entreats me spare the recent tale;
Her sighs I hear, her wishes I attend,
And o'er her sister's failings draw the veil.

This my success in search of Friendship's grove,
Where Liberty and Peace I hop'd to find,
And soften'd thus with Grief, deceitful Love,
In Friendship's borrow'd garb, attack'd my mind.

No passion raging like the roaring main,
But calm and gentle as a summer sea,
Meek Modesty and Virtue in his train,
What Friendship ought, true Love appear'd to be.

But soon was chang'd, alas! the pleasing scene,
Soon threat'ning storms my timid heart alarm'd;
And Love no more appear'd with brow serene,
But cloath'd in terrors, and with dangers arm'd.

From these enchanted bowers my steps I turn,
And seek from Prudence safety and repose;
Her rigid lessons I resolve to learn,
And gain that bliss which self-approof bestows.

Thus, dear Aspasia, my unhappy fate,
My heart's first darling schemes all blasted, see;
Yet now my bosom glows, with hope elate,
Fair Friendship's blessings still to find with thee.

By thee conducted to the realms of Peace,
No more in plaintive strains the Muse shall sing,
Henceforth with hymns of praise, and grateful bliss,
The groves shall echo, and the valleys ring.

*TO PEACE.

WRITTEN DURING THE LATE REBELLION, 1745.

RETURN, sweet Peace! Ah whither art thou flown?
How art thou frighted from this wretched land!
Which once it pleas'd thee to protect and own,
How great! how blest! beneath thy mild command.

Fair child of holy Love! companion dear
Of meek Content and smiling Innocence!
Oh! if thy gentle eyes such sight can bear,
Of Britain's sons behold the dire offence!

Behold sad Caledonia's horrid plain,
What hellish fury fires the shouting bands!
Ah see! with brother's blood their swords they stain;
Ye weeping angels, hold their murd'rous hands!

* This was written at a very early age, and was the author's first poetical attempt.

Thy banks, fair Tweed! were wont to echo sweet
The lover's wailing, and the lover's song;
Or, to the jocund pipe, the sounding feet
Of blithest lads, thy bonny berks among:

Now bright-arm'd hosts thy pleasant banks invade,
And fright thy helpless villages around;
Thy shepherds leave their flocks, and fly dismay'd;
With war's harsh din the distant rocks resound.

Th' industrious merchant's ever-anxious mind,
Opprest with care, his treasure lost deplores;
Yet curses he nor treach'rous seas, nor wind,
Nor pointed rocks unseen, nor craggy shores:

But thee he curses, oh thou most accurst!
Offspring of mad Ambition! cruel War!
Go reign in hell, be there supremely worst,
The blackest, most malignant demon far.

Whether remote in twilight shades you sleep,
Mild Peace! or chuse in cottage low to dwell;
Or won by pray'r, and nurs'd in silence deep,
Hide your fair form within the hermit's cell;

Oh let Britannia's griefs thy pity move;
Return! and with thee bring a beauteous train;
Plenty and Order, Piety, and Love,
And Art, and science, wait thy blissful reign.

Ah turn! let thy majestic look serene
Check the wild rage of thy presumptuous foes:
Thy beamy smile shall calm the troubled scene,
Cheer my sad heart, and heal my country's woes.

TO SOLITUDE.

Thou gentle nurse of pleasing woe!
To thee, from crowds, and noise, and show,
With eager haste I fly.
Thrice welcome, friendly Solitude!
O let no busy foot intrude,
Nor list'ning ear be nigh.

Soft, silent, melancholy maid!
With thee to yon sequester'd shade
My pensive steps I bend;
Still, at the mild approach of night,
When Cynthia lends her sober light,
Do thou my walk attend!

To thee alone my conscious heart
Its tender sorrow dares impart,

And ease my lab'ring breast;
To thee I trust the rising sigh,
And bid the tear that swells mine eye
No longer be suppress.

With thee among the haunted groves
The lovely sorc'ress Fancy roves,
O let me find her here!
For she can time and space control,
And swift transport my fleeting soul
To all it holds most dear!

Ah no!—ye vain delusions hence!
No more the hallow'd influence
Of Solitude pervert!
Shall Fancy cheat the precious hour,
Sacred to Wisdom's awful pow'r
And calm Reflection's part?

O Wisdom! from the sea-beat shore
Where, list'ning to the solemn roar,

Thy lov'd *Eliza strays,
Vouchsafe to visit my retreat,
And teach my erring, trembling feet
Thy heav'n-protected ways!

Oh guide me to the humble cell
Where Resignation loves to dwell
Contentment's bow'r in view.
Nor pining Grief with Absence drear,
Nor sick Suspense, nor anxious Fear,
Shall there my steps pursue.

There let my soul to *him* aspire
Whom none e'er sought with vain desire,
Nor lov'd in sad despair!
There, to his gracious will divine
My dearest, fondest hope resign,
And all my tend'rest care!

* Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, a lady well known to the literary world, author of a beautiful Ode to Wisdom.

Then Peace shall heal this wounded breast,
That pants to see another blest,
From selfish passion pure;
Peace, which when human wishes rise
Intense, for aught beneath the skies,
Can never be secure.

TO WINTER.

HAIL WINTER! venerable sage!
Whose provident and sparing age
In lean and naked poverty appears,
Whilst all thy treasure thou dost hide,
Lock'd in some mountain's hollow side,
With future blessings to enrich thy heirs.

First, youthful SPRING, fantastic maid,
In green embroidered robe array'd,
Thy store with all her gay attire supplies:
Enrich'd by thee, she flings her sweets
With lavish hand on all she meets,
"Her bells and flow'rets of a thousand dyes."

The fertile earth, with softening rain
By thee prepar'd to ev'ry grain
A safe retreat within her bosom yields:
Thy snowy mantle covers o'er,
With kindly warmth, the golden store
That SUMMER pours on Ceres' waving fields.

Pomona's trees their nourish'd root,
Their folded bud, and infant shoot,
Owe to thy cautious age and patient care:
With riches gather'd from thy hoard
Pale AUTUMN's plenteous horn is stored,
That may with SUMMER's boasted sheaves compare.

What tho' thy rigid hand refuse
One wreath to crown my vent'rous muse,
One flow'r to grace my unadorned lays;
Yet love shall tune my grateful voice,
Nor shall my thankless heart rejoice
In silent bliss, unmindful of thy praise.

Rescued by thee from gloomy fears,
From restless wishes, anxious cares,
And all the sorrows that on Absence wait,
By thee restored to ev'ry joy
That tender Friendship can supply,
To all my fondest pray'rs had ask'd of Fate

Shall not my reed be tuned for thee,
Thou friend of sweet Society?
Patron of rational serene delights!
Welcome thy keen enliv'ning frost!
Thy doubtful days in twilight lost!
Welcome thy long-protracted social nights!

Tho' FANCY flies thy sullen reign,
And ev'ry Muse forsakes the plain,
Nor haunts the leafless grove, nor ice-bound stream,
PHILOSOPHY and REASON view
Thy hoary head with rev'rence due,
And bid thy horrors raise their solemn theme.

Well pleas'd thy hollow voice they hear
Among the naked branches drear,
Or through the vaulted cavern bellowing loud;
Or listen studious to the sound
Of rushing waters, pouring round,
From the black bosom of the impending cloud.

Thee glad DEVOTION's heav'n-taught lays
Shall welcome! She, with constant praise,
Meets each appointment of great Nature's King.
Thy dear return with blessings fraught,
Shall ever wake my grateful thought,
And annual off'rings to thy fane I'll bring.

L' ESTATE. METASTASIO.

Or che niega i doni suoi
La stagion de' fiori amica,
Cinta il crin di bionda spica
Volge a noi
L' Estate il piè.
E già sotto al raggio ardente
Così bollono l' arene
Che alla barbara Cirene
Più cocente
Il sol non é.

Più non hanno i primi albori
Le lor gelide rugiade;
Più dal ciel pioggia non cade,
Che ristori
E l'erba, e'l fior:
Alimento il fonte, il rio
Al terren più non comparte,
Che si fende in ogni parte
Per desío
Di nuovo umor.

SUMMER. FROM METASTASIO.

FAREWELL, mild Spring! farewell, each early flow'r
On the soft bank or verdant meadow born!
SUMMER advances to assert her pow'r,
Her yellow tresses crown'd with ears of corn.

The streams decrease beneath the solar ray,
Shrink from its rage, and leave the burning sand;
Not more oppressive beams, the raging day
Points on the parch'd Cirene's barb'rous land.

No more the morning sheds her frosty dews,
While no rude winds her gentle hours disturb;
Nor fruitful rain from equal heav'n renews
Each beauteous flow'ret and salubrious herb.

No more the fountain, or the wand'ring stream,
Pours its abundance o'er th' irriguous plain;
Earth gapes beneath the sun's relentless beam,
And vainly asks the cool refreshing rain.

Polveroso al sole in faccia
Si scolora il verde faggio,
Che di frondi al nuovo maggio
Le sue braccia
Rivestì.
Ed ingrato al suol natio
Fuor del tronco ombra non stende,
Nè dal sol l'acque disende
Di quel rio
Che lo nutrì.

Molle il volto, il sen bagnato,
Dorme steso in strana guisa
Su la messe già recisa
L'affannato
Mietitor:
E con man pietosà, e pronte
Va tergendogli la bella
Amorosa villanella
Della fronte
Il suo sudor.

Discolour'd, dry, the tall majestic beech,
That MAY had freshly clothed in vivid green,
And bade his broad arms, wide projected, reach
The pride, the glory of the sylvan scene,

Withers, ungrateful to its native ground,
And scarce beyond the trunk its shadows spread;
No shelt'ring leaves protect with coolness round
The friendly rill that long its branches fed.

His face and bosom bathed in honest sweat,
The weary reaper throws him careless down,
Stretch'd on the swarth, and, thro' the mid-day heat,
Sleeps on the harvest that his labours crown:

Whilst, with a ready and a tender hand,
The village-maid, to love and Corin true,
Intent and silent takes her careful stand,
And from his forehead wipes the trickling dew.

Là su l'aridò terreno
Scemo il Can d'ogni vigore
Langue accanto al suo signore
E nè meno
Osa latrar;
Ma tramanda al seno oppresso
Per le fauci inaridite
Nuove sempre aure gradite
Con lo spesso
Respirar.

Quel Torel, ch' innamorava
Del suo ardir ninfe, e pastori
Se ne' tronchi degli allori
S'avezzava
A ben serir,
Del ruscello or su le sponde
Lento giace, e mugge, e guata
La giovenca innamorata,
Che risponde
Al suo muggir.

On the scorch'd ground, near his lov'd master, lies
The panting Dog, whose clammy jaws now fail
To give the watchful bark, and oft he tries,
With quick short breath, to catch the grateful gale.

The youthful Bull, whom oft the rustic swain
With wonder saw exert his dauntless might,
No more, with butting forehead, rules the plain,
Nor wounds the bending trees in mimic fight.

Laid on the margin of the scanty rill,
Lowing, he watches his lov'd Heifer near;
Whose faint responsive moans no longer fill
Heav'n's echoing vault, but feebly strike the ear.

Per timor del caldo raggio
L'augellin non batte l'ale,
Alle stridule cicale
Cede il faggio
L'ufignuol.
Mostran già spoglie novelle
Le macchiate antiche Serpi,
Che ravvolte a' nudi sterpi
Si fan belle
In faccia al fol.

Al calor del lungo giorno
Senton là ne' salsi umori
Anche i muti abitatori,
Che il soggiorno
Intiepidì:
E da' loro antri muscosi
Più non van scorrendo il mare;
Ma fra'sassi, e l'alghe amare
Stanno ascosi
A' rai del dì.

No more with nimble wing the feather'd race
In the fierce eye of day advent'rous tow'r;
The Nightingale resigns her ruin'd sprays,
And noisy Grasshoppers usurp the bow'r.

But the sleek Serpents, by the genial fires
Reviv'd, desert their faded sloughs, and bold,
Round the bare branch weaving their agile spires,
Blaze to the sun in renovated gold.

The mute inhabitants that coolly play,
And in their native briny waters lave,
Feel the long rigours of the Summer's day,
And dread the changes of the tepid wave.

Near the hot surface they forbear to glide,
In mossy caves or coral grottos laid
Beneath the dark projecting rocks they hide,
Or where the bitter sea-weed lends its shade.

Pur l'Estate tormentosa,
S'io rimiro, amata Fille,
Le tue placide pupille,
Si penosa
A me non è:
Mi conduca il cieco Dio
Fra' Numidi, o al Mar gelato,
Io sarò sempre beato,
Idol mio,
Vicino a te.

Benchè adusta abbia la fronte
Con le curve opposte spalle,
Una ombrosa opaca valle
Cela il monte
Al caldo sol:
Là dall' alto in giù cadendo
Serpe un rio limpido, e vago,
Che raccolto in picciol lago
Va nutrendo
Il verde suol.

Yet will not I deplore the painful heat,
Tho' SUMMER drives her burning car so nigh,
When my fond looks my lovely Phillis greet,
And the soft languish of her modest eye.

Lead me, blind God, if such thy wild decree,
To Afric's sands with ceaseless heats opprest,
Or where cold Zembla views her frozen sea,
Sure, if with thee, my fairest, to be blest.

And see, my love, beneath that mountain's height,
That bares its shoulder to the burning skies,
Cool, and protected from oppressive light,
Form'd for retreat, the shady valley lies.

There down the rocks the winding riv'lets flow,
Thro' shaggy brakes their limpid streams are seen,
Which, gather'd in the crystal lake below,
Nourish the fertile vale's perennial green.

Là del sol dubbia è la luce,
Come suol notturna luna,
Nè pastor greggia importuna
Vi conduce
A pascolar:
E se v'entra il sol furtivo,
Vedi l'ombra delle piante
Al variar d'aura incostante
Dentro il rivo
Tremolar.

Là, mia vita, uniti andiamo,
Là cantando il dì s'inganni:
Per timor di nuovi affanni
Non lasciamo
Di gioir.
Che raddoppia i suoi tormenti,
Chi con occhio mal sicuro
Fra la nebbia del futuro
Va gli eventi
A prevenir.

There the sun's doubtful light, attemper'd, shews
Like the mild lustre of the nightly moon;
No shepherd the sequester'd shelter knows,
Nor thither leads th' intruding flock at noon.

Should through the gloom the stealthy sun prevail,
See from his ray the scene new beauties take;
The margin plants, mov'd by the varying gale,
Reflected wave along the trembling lake.

In that sweet spot together let us live;
The tedious day shall hasten while we sing;
Content and joy the present hour shall give,
And hide the ills futurity may bring:

For woes on woes that anxious wretch pursue,
And on his soul fantastic terrors crowd,
Who dares with eye distrustful stretch his view
Where Fate has spread her providential cloud.

Me non sdegni il biondo Dio,
Mé con Fille unisca Amore;
E poi sfoghi il suo rigore
Fato rio,
Nemico ciel.
Che il desío non mi tormenta
O di fasto, o di ricchezza;
Nè d'incomoda vecchiezza
Mi spaventa
Il pigro gel.

Curvo il tergo, e bianco il mento
Toccherò le corde usate,
E alle corde mal temprate
Roco accento
Accoppierò:
E a que' rai non più vivaci
Rivolgendomi talora,
Su la man, che m'innamora,
Freddi baci
Imprimerò.

Let but the fair-hair'd God confirm my state,
In silken bands to my lov'd Phillis led,
Let adverse seasons then and cruel Fate
Exhaust their rigours on my patient head.

For me nor wealth, nor glitt'ring pomp allure,
Their specious charms no more my heart engage,
Nor shall it shrink, affrighted, to endure
The lazy frost of chill enervate age:

For then, with bending back, and snowy beard,
And trembling hand, I'll touch th' accustom'd string,
And still, with partial ear by Phillis heard,
To Love and her, in hoarser accents sing;

Still on those faded eyes my sight I'll rest,
No longer kindling at her lover's song;
And print, while pressing to my faithful breast,
Cold kisses on the hand I lov'd so long.

Giusti Dei, che riposate
Placidissimi sull'etra,
La mia Fille, e la mia cetra
Deh serbate
Per pietà!
Fili poi la Parca avara
I miei dì mill'anni, e mille,
La mia cetra, e la mia Fille
Sempre cara
A me sarà.

Ye who at ease on ether soft recline,
Indulgent hear this only fond desire!
Oh hear, for gentle pity, Pow'rs divine!
And grant me still my Phillis and my lyre!

Then, would penurious Fate the pray'r regard,
And spin my days beyond the thousandth year,
Still to the bosom of their grateful bard
My lyre and Phillis should be ever dear.

SONNETTO.

Qual agnellina dal sentiero uscita,
E'l pastor e l'ovil posto in oblio,
Molt' anni errò, lungi da té, mio dio,
Da té, vero Pastor, l'alma fuggita.

Se mirò vago rio, valle fiorita,
Colá rivolse il giovenil desio,
Ma sempre amari i fior, torbido il rio
Ella trovò, dal proprio error tradita.

Ond'hor, cangiato alfin l'incauto stile,
Gía del suo lungo vaneggiar si pente,
E a té ritorna ed al tuo fido ovile:
Deh l'accogli, O Signor! se'l ciel lucente
Un di cangiasti con capanna umile
Per lei sottrar d'infernal lupo al dente.

TRANSLATION OF THE FOREGOING SONNET.

How like a wanton lamb, that careless play'd,
The shepherd and the fold forgotten quite,
My vagrant soul, in search of vain delight,
Many long years from her true Shepherd stray'd!

If winding stream or flow'ry vale she spied,
Thither her youthful wishes eager led;
But bitter were the flow'rs on which she fed,
The turbid stream no cooling draught supplied.

Thus oft beguil'd, at length her fruitless range,
Her heedless wand'ring steps, she deeply mourns,
And back to thee and to thy fold returns.
Receive her, dearest Lord! who once didst change
Heav'n's brightest mansion for a roof of straw,
To snatch her from the wolf's devouring jaw.

AN IRREGULAR ODE.

TO MRS. ELIZ. CARTER.

Who had recommended to me the Stoic Philosophy, as productive of Fortitude; and who was about to publish a Translation of Epictetus.

I.

COME, Epictetus, arm my breast
With thy impenetrable steel,
No more the wounds of grief to feel,
Nor mourn, by others' woes deprest.
O teach my trembling heart
To scorn Affliction's dart!
Teach me to mock the Tyrant Pain!
For see, around me stand
A dreadful murd'rous band!
I fly their cruel pow'r in vain!
Here lurks DISTEMPER'S horrid train,
And *there* the PASSIONS lift their flaming brands;
These with fell rage my helpless body tear,
While *those*, with daring hands,
Against th' immortal soul their impious weapons rear.

II.

Where'er I turn fresh evils meet my eyes;
Sin, Sorrow, and Disgrace
Pursue the human race!
There, on the bed of sickness, VIRTUE lies!
See FRIENDSHIP bleeding by the sword
Of base INGRATITUDE!
See baleful JEALOUSY intrude,
And poison all the bliss that LOVE had stor'd.
Oh seal my ears against the piteous cry
Of Innocence distrest!
Nor let me shrink when Fancy's eye
Beholds the guilty wretch's breast
Beneath the tort'ring pincers heave!
Nor for the num'rous wants of Mis'ry grieve,
Which all-disposing Heav'n denies me to relieve!

III.

No longer let my fleeting joys depend
On social or domestic ties!
Superior let my spirit rise,
Not in the gentle counsels of a friend,

Nor in the smiles of love expect delight:
But teach me in MYSELF to find
Whate'er can please or fill my mind.
Let inward beauty charm the mental sight;
Let godlike Reason, beaming bright,
Chase far away each gloomy shade,
Till VIRTUE's heav'nly form display'd
Alone shall captivate my soul,
And her divinest love possess me whole!

IV.

But ah! what means this impious pride,
Which heav'nly hosts deride?
Within MYSELF does Virtue dwell?
Is all serene and beauteous there?
What mean these chilling damps of fear?
Tell me, Philosophy! thou boaster! tell:
This godlike all-sufficient mind,
Which, in its own perfection blest,
Defies the woes or malice of mankind
To shake its self-possessing rest,

Is it not foul, weak, ignorant, and blind?
Oh man! from conscious Virtue's praise
Fall'n, fall'n!—what refuge can'st thou find?
What pitying hand again will raise
From native earth thy groveling frame?
Ah, who will cleanse thy heart from spot of sinful blame?

V.

But see! what sudden glories from the sky
To my benighted soul appear,
And all the gloomy prospect cheer!
What awful form approaches nigh?
Awful, yet mild, as is the southern breeze
That whispers through the rustling trees,
And gently bids the forest nod.
Hark! thunder breaks the air, and angels speak!
"Behold the Saviour of the world! behold the Lamb of
"God!"
Ye sons of Pride, behold his aspect meek!
The tear of pity on his cheek!

See in his train appear
HUMILITY, and PATIENCE sweet;
REPENTANCE, prostrate at his sacred feet,
Bedews with tears, and wipes them with her flowing hair!

VI.

What scenes now meet my wond'ring eyes!
What hallow'd grave,
By mourning maids attended round,
Attracts the Saviour's steps?—what heart-felt wound
His spotless bosom heaves with tender sighs?
Why weeps the son belov'd, omnipotent to save?
But lo! he waves his awful hand;
The sleeping clay obeys his dread command.
O "*Lazaru! come forth!*"—come forth, and see
The dear effects of wond'rous love!
He, at whose word the seas and rocks remove,
Thy Friend, thy Lord, thy Maker, weeps for thee!

VII.

Thy walls, Jerusalem, have seen thy King,
In meekness clad, lament thy hapless fate!
Unquench'd his love, tho' paid with ruthless hate!
O lost, relentless Sion! didst thou know
Who thus vouchsafes thy courts to tread,
What loud Hosannas wouldst thou sing!
How eager crown his honour'd head!
Nor see unmov'd his kind paternal woe,
Nor force his tears, his precious blood, for thee to flow!

VIII.

No more repine, my coward soul,
The sorrows of mankind to share,
Which he who could the world control
Did not disdain to bear!
Check not the flow of sweet fraternal love,
By Heav'ns high King in bounty giv'n,
Thy stubborn heart to soften and improve,
Thy earth-clad spirit to refine,
And gradual raise to love divine,
And wing its soaring flight to Heav'n!

IX.

Nor thou, Eliza, who from early youth,
By Genius led, by Virtue train'd,
Hast sought the fountain of eternal truth,
And each fair spring of knowledge drain'd,
Nor thou, with fond chimeras vain,
With Stoic pride and fancied scorn
Of human feelings, human pain,
My feeble soul sustain!
Far nobler precepts should thy page adorn.
O, rather guide me to the sacred source
Of real wisdom, real force,
Thy life's unerring rule!
To thee fair Truth her radiant form unshrouds,
Tho', wrapp'd in thick impenetrable clouds,
She mock'd the labours of the Grecian school.

FINIS.

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